Province of Ontario

It's All About Improvement!

The Report of the Task Force on Effective Schools
June 2001

TASK FORCE ON EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Letter of Transmittal

June 2001

The Honourable Janet Ecker
Minister of Education

Dear Minister,

We are pleased to present *It's All About Improvement! The Report of the Task Force on Effective Schools*.

This report is the culmination of five months of intensive study and consultation. We have conducted a thorough review of relevant research and met with experts in the field as well as representatives of all of the major provincial education organizations representing students, parents, teachers, support staff, principals, supervisory officers, directors of education, and trustees. We also consulted well over 1,500 people from district school boards and provincial organizations in our province-wide consultations.

We thank all those who so generously contributed their time and expertise to our report.

We have had the pleasure of working on this project with a small but talented team, whose expertise, advice, and hard work are reflected in this report. We commend them to you for their contributions to publicly funded education in this province.

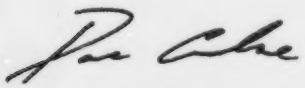
Throughout our work, we have continually been impressed with the depth of commitment to publicly funded schools that exists in this province. There is a pervasive belief that a top-quality elementary and secondary education system is a vital cornerstone of our democracy, our well-being, and our economy.

We have taken the position that the most important aspect of education that we need to nurture in our elementary and secondary schools is the commitment to improve. No matter how good our schools may be, they can always improve.

To bring about improvements in the levels of student achievement, our schools need to commit themselves more fully to accountability and focus more clearly on measurable results. At the same time, they need and deserve continuous and focused support from the province in the form of adequate resources to build and maintain their capacity to change and improve.

Our report presents 36 recommendations that we believe will strengthen our schools and, more important, lead to higher levels of student achievement. We know that meaningful change takes time, but there is no better time than today to begin implementing the changes we are recommending.

Thank you for the opportunity to explore the issue of effective schools and to produce this report.



Dave Cooke
Project Leader

Ann Vanstone
Project Leader

Task Force Team

Project manager: John Davies
Research: Don Beggs, Jodene Dunleavy, Carole Olsen, Margaret Wilson
Communications/outreach: Cathy Lofgreen
Administration: Muriel Nahas, Cicily Tang
Editing: Patricia Tolmie
French translation/editing: François Dionne, René Fitzgerald, Myriam Jarsky
Design: Fizzz Design Inc.

Contents

Letter of Transmittal

1. Introduction 1

2. Developing Effective Schools 5

3. Supporting Excellence in Teaching 11

4. Recognizing School Improvement 25

5. Organizing Schools to Support Continuous Improvement 37

6. Monitoring Board Performance 47

7. Summary and List of Recommendations 59

Appendices:

A. Advisory Group 69

B. Organizations Consulted 71

C. How Other Jurisdictions Monitor School and Board Performance 73

Notes 79

Select Bibliography 85

Sample School Report Cards 97

1. Introduction

The Task Force on Effective Schools was asked by the Premier and the Minister of Education to recommend ways to improve the effectiveness of Ontario's publicly funded elementary and secondary schools.

Our report focuses on four courses of action that we believe will lead to more effective schools:

1. Supporting excellence in teaching by ensuring that Ontario continues to have capable, well-trained teachers who are assigned to teach in their areas of subject expertise
2. Promoting and recognizing school improvement by collecting better performance data, setting targets for improvement, mandating a school improvement process, monitoring progress, and rewarding excellence
3. Finding ways to organize our schools to support a process of continuous improvement
4. Reviewing the quality of work done by district school boards to support continuous improvement in the schools in their jurisdictions.

Our overriding goal throughout our work has been to make recommendations that will enable schools to prove their effectiveness by improving the level of student achievement. Hence the title of our report—*It's All About Improvement!*

Ontario's students are the province's promise for the future. It is our sincere hope that this report and our recommendations, when implemented, will allow students to fulfil this promise, for themselves and for the good of us all.

.....

> There was a time when schools were schools and teachers were left alone to get on with the business of teaching. It is now universally recognized that such a system cannot guarantee that children will be allowed to get on with the business of learning, and that a healthy educational system is open and inviting of improvement and accountability.[1]

Forming an accurate opinion about the effectiveness of something as complex and diverse as a publicly funded education system is a difficult task.

When Ontarians are promoting the province in other parts of Canada and in other countries, they often sing the praises of Ontario's "high" standards of education. The same people, at home, can be heard bemoaning the "low" standards of our education system.

Improvement is achieved through teamwork.

– Consultation participant

In a recent public opinion survey, only 55 per cent of Ontario parents said that they are satisfied with the school system in general. But a soaring 82 per cent said that they are satisfied with the school that their oldest school-aged child attends.[2]

It seems that Ontarians' opinions about the effectiveness and quality of our education system are specific to particular circumstances and contexts.

Perceptions of the effectiveness of our education system are important because of the relationship between these perceptions and the level of public support for publicly funded elementary and secondary schools. In the long run, the key to public support is the education system's level of commitment to continuous improvement and accountability for results. If our schools can demonstrate that they are improving the level of student achievement, then they will continue to enjoy the high levels of public support that have been a hallmark of this province throughout its history.

And make no mistake, there is a passionate commitment in this province to the concept of a strong publicly funded education system. We heard this clearly over the course of the last five months, as we talked to students, parents, teachers, principals, other district school board staff members, supervisory officers, directors of education, trustees, and leaders of education and other organizations.

Lessons learned in jurisdictions around the world tell us that schools and students improve only when all parts of the education system are focused on one driving force—the promotion of higher levels of student achievement and success. Everything we do—from large-scale province-wide reforms to changes that take place in individual schools—must be evaluated in terms of its contribution to improvement.

Successful accountability systems do three things: 1) create incentives to align curriculum and instruction; 2) foster the analysis and use of data; and 3) focus attention on continuous improvement.

– EdSource, "National Accountability Movement Offers Lessons for California," May 2000, <www.edsource.org/nat_acc_mov.html>.

Our district school boards and schools know that the notion of continuous improvement is not a passing fad. It's not just today's "education flavour of the month." The public has made it clear that it holds the Ministry of Education, boards, and schools accountable for improved student achievement. We agree that all partners in the system must be held accountable, but accountability is only one way to motivate improvement. Another way is to ensure that the system has the capacity to improve.

In this report, we recommend the steps that we believe need to be taken to establish both the accountability and the capacity for improvement. Our discussions about supporting excellence in teaching, recognizing improvement, organizing schools to support continuous improvement, and reviewing the work done all reflect our firm belief that, with the right balance of pressure and support, *all* students can learn and *all* schools can be effective.

Our Mandate

In January 2001, the Minister of Education appointed Dave Cooke and Ann Vanstone, former co-chairs of the Education Improvement Commission, as project leaders of the Task Force on Effective Schools. We were asked "to conduct a review of school and school board practices that directly affect student learning and achievement." We were also asked to make recommendations on the following matters:

- How best to organize schools to support continual improvement. The team will examine such things as: the structure of schools, assignment of staff, use of available resources, timetabling and the impact of these organizational elements on student learning.
- How individual schools can be recognized for their demonstrated improvements to student learning and achievement.
- Mechanisms to continue moving forward with supports for teacher excellence as laid out in Ontario's comprehensive Teacher Testing Program. These mechanisms will encourage and recognize ongoing teacher excellence. This will be supported by existing research and best practices focused at the school level.
- Models the Ministry of Education should implement to review boards on an ongoing basis to ensure that they are using resources in the most effective ways to improve student learning and achievement.[3]

In investigating these four areas, we had an opportunity to research and discuss a wide variety of factors related to school effectiveness and improvement. There are, however, other factors related to this topic—for example, curriculum—

that were not included in our mandate. We believe that these other factors need to be considered in the discussion on school effectiveness that will continue after we submit our report, but they are not discussed in our report.

Our Work

One of our first steps was to form an advisory group of representatives from province-wide education organizations (see appendix A for a list of members of the advisory group). Since January 2001, the advisory group has met four times to comment on our research, consultation questions, and the sample school report cards that we developed (the report cards can be found at the end of this report). This group made a valuable contribution to our deliberations, and we thank them for their help.

In April 2001, we consulted with representatives from the province's 72 district school boards and 33 school authorities. During our consultations, held in nine locations around the province, over 1,100 people—secondary school students, parents, teaching and non-teaching school board staff, principals, directors of education, and trustees—shared with us their views on the four areas that we were asked to investigate.

We also met with over 400 members of province-wide education organizations that represent students, parents, teachers, support staff, principals, supervisory officers, directors of education, and trustees. (See appendix B for a list of these organizations.) In addition, we spoke with experts who have studied the topics of effectiveness and continuous improvement in schools and boards.

In one of our final consultations, we visited an elementary school and met with students from Grades 2 to 8. This experience was a highlight of our work, and one of the most enjoyable and insightful consultations we held. We thank these students for telling us what they like most about their school and what they would do to make it better.

Finally, we conducted literature reviews on the topics of effective schools, teacher excellence, school leadership, monitoring school and board performance, capacity building and school improvement, school self-evaluation, independent reviews of schools and boards, school organization (for example, class size and learning time), and accountability. We collected examples of how other jurisdictions in Canada, the United States, Great Britain, Australia, and other countries have pursued the goal of improving student achievement. We consulted with experts in many jurisdictions, both researchers and practitioners who have experience with and expertise in strategies to improve student achievement. (This report contains a select bibliography on each of the topics we investigated.)

2. Developing Effective Schools

Perspectives on Effectiveness

In the late 1960s, American researchers began to try to understand why certain schools were able to foster high levels of student achievement despite the challenges posed by their students' backgrounds (issues included race, gender, and socio-economic status). Early research on effective schools indicated that as long as schools have the "right" ingredients, they can make a difference for *all* students.[4]

Today, effective-schools research "is not limited to the question of whether or not schools *can* influence student outcomes, since it is evident that they do."[5] Instead, researchers and policy makers agree that if we know what makes a school effective, we should focus on how this knowledge can be used to help schools that are struggling and to ensure that successful schools become even better. In other words, we should use this information to promote continuous improvement in all of our schools.[6]

With particularly long traditions in this area, researchers in Canada, the United States, and Great Britain have generated many lists of what makes an effective school. Based on our review of their research, we agreed that effective schools are those in which the following 10 conditions prevail:

- There are high expectations for all students to achieve.
- The teaching is top-quality.
- The learning environment is positive.
- Teachers have a comprehensive knowledge of the curriculum.

...Our measure of a good school includes not only a positive atmosphere nourished by caring student-teacher relationships, strong leadership, and a broad extracurricular program, but also the availability of programs to serve the career needs of all students, student services designed to support these career needs and opportunities to maximize student achievement and allow as many students as possible to complete secondary school successfully.

– A.J.C. King and M.J. Peart, *The Good School: Strategies for Making Secondary Schools Effective* (Toronto: Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, 1990), 1.

- School days are organized to provide the maximum amount of learning time.
- Parents are involved in their children's learning.
- Teachers plan for improvement.
- Performance improvement goals are set and achieved.
- Progress in student performance is closely monitored and regularly communicated.
- Success is celebrated.

Few would deny that the characteristics of effective schools listed above provide helpful benchmarks for governments, boards, and schools to use in their improvement efforts. But there are criticisms of effective-schools research that we cannot overlook if we are going to use it as a springboard for improving Ontario's education system.

Many researchers and educators have criticized the research on effective schools for relying too much on academic outcomes as the only measure of effectiveness. The concern is that, in doing so, it may overlook other factors that affect the way students and teachers experience schools.

We agree with this criticism and conclude that the way we define and measure effectiveness should involve standard measures of academic outcomes, such as test scores, and other measures, such as rate of attendance and the degree to which students and parents feel satisfied, supported, and encouraged by their schools (as measured by simple surveys).

Researchers have also cautioned governments against relying on *one* list of characteristics of effective schools. During our consultations, students, parents, teachers, principals, support staff, directors of education, trustees, and representatives of provincial education organizations told us that they would support the development of a province-wide framework that lists the characteristics of effective schools as a ***guide*** or ***benchmark*** for board and school improvement. Like the critics of effective-schools research, however, the people we spoke with were unanimous in saying that effectiveness and improvement cannot be assessed on the basis of a single list of characteristics and the results of the Grades 3, 6, 9, and 10 assessments administered by Ontario's Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO).

They believe that effective schools also:

- focus on the success of all students
- use the results of EQAO tests and other assessments as a basis for improving individual student achievement

- share their own best practices and use the best practices of other schools to guide improvement
- have a strong school spirit, as evidenced by a comprehensive extracurricular program
- focus on all aspects of education (that is, on the academic, spiritual, emotional, social, and physical development of a child)
- have strong connections to the community and an actively involved parent group
- promote positive attitudes towards learning
- recognize student and staff excellence
- embrace diversity.

Everyone, from students to trustees, reminded us that if common benchmarks for effectiveness are to be helpful in the school improvement planning process, they must be based on the needs of students and on the combined views of everyone with a stake in the improvement of student achievement. We were cautioned against defining school effectiveness in a way that would make it difficult for schools to consider their local needs and system priorities as they plan for improvement.

For example, representatives of the province's Catholic schools emphasized the centrality of the Catholic faith in their definition of effectiveness:

> While we share commonalties with other systems, Catholic schools are not... secular schools which teach an additional course in Religious Education. Our Catholic mission and vision is integral to everything we do in Catholic schools.[7]

Participants from French-language schools also told us of the importance of preserving and enhancing French language, culture, and institutions in their schools:

> The feelings of satisfaction, security, and self-confidence that an education community must develop within schools all contribute to creating an atmosphere that is conducive to true learning. For Franco-Ontarian schools, these qualities are even more necessary if they are to be able to develop in our students an appreciation of their culture and a desire to live and work in French.[8]

Each school and school community has different needs and characteristics, and these will influence how the school defines effectiveness. In addition to Catholic and French-language schools, schools that have multilingual, multicultural, and

To make our school better, we would have longer recesses, newer books in our library, a nurse, more secretaries, more computers in our classrooms, better playgrounds, and computer and music teachers.

– Elementary school students

aboriginal student populations and schools located in isolated parts of the province will have different perspectives on what it means to be or to become an effective school.

Board and school administrators need to listen to the views of all stakeholders, including students, and then work with them all to answer the questions "What matters most to us?" and "What can we do that will result in the greatest improvement in our students' level of achievement?"

A Blend of Pressure and Support

Students, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff, and principals in schools throughout Ontario and in other jurisdictions are trying to define effectiveness and set goals for improvement. Research, much of it based on the experiences of those schools that are working to improve, tells us that if continuous school improvement is the goal, it is not enough just to know "what makes a good school." Those involved in planning for, implementing, and evaluating change also need to know "how one makes a school good."[9]

Researchers also tell us that "effective educational change always needs a blend of pressure and support."[10]

Pressure, whether it comes from the province, through an accountability framework, or from the school itself, through its own improvement planning process, provides a "wake-up call for local educators to pay attention to key aspects of reform."[11] Support, on the other hand, recognizes that schools—especially those that are struggling—require "motivation, skills, and resources (time, materials, access to expertise)" to build the capacity for continuous improvement.[12]

In the past five years, the Ontario Ministry of Education has initiated a series of education reforms—a new elementary and secondary curriculum, province-wide testing, reports on student achievement, a new governance system, a new funding model, and a new approach to training and evaluating teachers. Boards and schools are adjusting to these reforms and working hard to meet the challenges involved. In our view, however, Ontario's education system has not yet achieved a balance between pressure and support. We must ensure that where there is pressure for improvement, there is also adequate support to help boards and schools improve.

The Ministry of Education has a key responsibility to supply both pressure and support by, for example:

- defining a vision for education in Ontario (clarifying the province's education goals)
- defining a set of performance standards for schools and school boards

The focus on learning for *all* students is fundamental. This pervades all other assumptions. Above all, students need to have a voice in examining existing situations and doing something to improve them. It is not a case of adults, by themselves, deciding or squabbling over what is right for students.

– Michael Fullan, preface to Lorna M. Earl and Linda E. Lee, *Evaluation of the Manitoba School Improvement Program* (Winnipeg: Manitoba School Improvement Program, 1998), i; also available online at: <http://improveschools.web.net/tempeval.pdf>.

- setting province-wide targets for improved student achievement
- ensuring that the tools used to assess student achievement (such as province-wide tests) are closely aligned with the performance standards that schools are expected to achieve
- providing sufficient and appropriate resources to allow the province's education goals to be met
- implementing a comprehensive accountability framework that includes the following aspects:
  - a clear definition of roles and responsibilities (who does what)
  - mechanisms to assess performance throughout the system (for example, school and board reviews)
  - strategies to help schools that are underachieving (for example, helping these schools identify goals and plan for improvement)
  - ways to recognize effective schools (those that have shown significant improvement, as well as those with very high levels of student achievement)
  - mechanisms for communicating results to the public (for example, school report cards).

The idea behind standards-based reform is to set clear standards for what we want students to learn and to use those academic standards to drive other changes in the system—e.g., curriculum, assessment, professional development.

– Heidi Glidden, "Making Standards Matter 1999," American Federation of Teachers, Educational Issues Dept., 1, <http://aft.org/edissues/standards99/toc.htm>.

In recent years, many boards and schools in Great Britain and the United States have shown an exceptional capacity to change in response to local, county or state, and national pressure for improvement and greater accountability. These jurisdictions have recognized that central governments are responsible for providing the support that schools need to achieve long-term change.

To build the capacity for continuous improvement in Ontario's schools, we believe that the Ministry of Education must strengthen its support for school boards and schools in those areas that are most likely to affect student achievement. In chapter 6, we point out that school boards carry a similar responsibility. They too must help their schools improve through a combination of pressure and support.

Researchers have concluded that the first priority for governments and boards should be the quality of instruction:

> Student achievement is affected most directly by the quality of instruction, which includes the quality of the curriculum, the pedagogy, and the assessment. Instruction is directly affected by school capacity, which includes the total of teachers' knowledge, skills, and dispositions as well as the strength of the professional community and the coherence of the school program.[13]

With this in mind, we have chosen to address the "teacher excellence" item in our mandate first.

3. Supporting Excellence in Teaching

Every student deserves to be taught by knowledgeable, qualified, and competent teachers. Effective teachers are vital to the improvement of individual student achievement and the development of effective schools.

Research confirms what we heard during our consultations from the entire spectrum of participants, and what parents, teachers, and students have always known—that the effectiveness of the teacher is the most important factor in improving student achievement.

Substantial evidence exists that student achievement depends largely on the capacity of the teacher—that is, on the sum of the teacher's academic and professional education[14]—and that "what expert teachers know and do is in significant respects subject and level specific."[15] In other words, teachers' expertise is based on their academic course work in university (or, in the case of teachers of technical subjects, their technical expertise) and on the training they received in teaching a certain age range of students (for example, primary, or early adolescent, or secondary). This dual foundation has implications both for how teachers qualify to teach and the subjects they are assigned to teach.

There is also ample evidence that successful schools have strong and effective leaders. The principal has a pivotal role in developing the capacity of all school staff to work together—not in isolation, but as a team—to support continuous improvement in the level of student achievement.

In this chapter, we turn our attention to teachers, their needs, and the needs of the principals who lead them.

THE EFFECTIVE TEACHER

Good teachers share a passion for nurturing young minds and spirits and a talent for passing on knowledge and skills.

Good teachers share other traits as well. For example, they are lifelong learners: they do not stop learning when they receive their certification. Good teachers work closely with other teachers and members of the school staff. They think of their school as a family, and they understand that the professionals in the school have a collective responsibility to improve the level of student achievement. A teacher's ability to examine test results and make sense of them is a key factor in improving the level of student achievement, but the teacher must then work with fellow teachers and others in the school to plan for these improvements.[16] Good teachers also know how to work with parents, the first teachers of the child.

> We need teacher education and professional development for teachers to focus more on what teachers are expected to know; for example, the new curriculum, new technologies, and assessment.
>
> – Consultation participant

Researchers tell us that "highly accomplished teachers should have a rich understanding of the subject(s) they teach and appreciate how knowledge in their subject is created, organized, linked to other disciplines and applied in real world settings."[17] This connection between knowledge and "know-how" appears in research from Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada.[18] Simply put, the research says, it is difficult to teach what you do not know.

We talked to a history teacher who described how he felt when he was assigned to teach mathematics. "Scared," he said, and even though it was months later, he was still emotional about the experience.

During our consultations, we received a strong message from students, parents, teachers, support staff, and trustees across the province: Teachers should teach only what they are qualified to teach. This does not mean that every teacher must become a subject specialist (although many people insist that we need higher levels of teaching expertise in literacy and numeracy, even for teachers of the primary grades). But it does mean that a teacher's academic background must have a direct relationship to the curriculum the teacher is assigned to deliver.[19]

Teachers who do not have a firm grounding in their subject matter will have difficulty improving student achievement. Ontario's new elementary and secondary curriculum has the strong support of Ontario teachers, but it presents new challenges. Both the challenges of the new curriculum and the research cited above suggest we need to rethink some of our current practices.

Supply of teachers

During our consultations, we frequently heard concerns about the current and future supply of teachers. This issue merits immediate attention for many reasons but, most important, we cannot improve our schools and the level of student achievement without an adequate supply of qualified teachers.

Teachers come to Ontario schools from several sources: graduates of Ontario faculties of education, teachers trained elsewhere in Canada, Ontario university graduates who receive their teacher training in other countries, and teachers who have moved to Ontario from other countries. The current supply is more than tight. Applications to faculties of education are down. There are still more applicants than there are places, but the applicants do not necessarily match the identified needs of the system. For example, both of the province's French-language teacher education programs have low enrolments relative to the need for francophone teachers. This situation has serious implications for Ontario's French-language schools.

In a tight supply situation, boards may find it necessary to temporarily hire people who do not have Ontario teaching qualifications. There are two ways in which uncertified teachers can be hired to teach in Ontario's publicly funded schools. One is an emergency provision that allows district school boards to hire "a person eighteen years of age or older and the holder of an Ontario secondary school diploma" as a temporary teacher for a short period of time.[20] The Ministry of Education has no system in place to track the use of this provision, although news reports indicate that its use is increasing.

The second way is for the district school board to obtain a "letter of permission" from the Minister of Education that permits the board to hire an uncertified teacher to teach for a full year.[21] There has been a sharp increase in the number of these teachers in our schools.

In addition to the increase in uncertified temporary teachers, there is also a significant increase in the number of teachers being assigned to teach subjects outside their area of qualification. This is likely due to a shortage of teachers in certain subject areas. For example, we know that the pool of teachers qualified to teach math, science, technology, and French has fallen dramatically. (We discuss the issue of teachers being assigned outside their areas of qualification later in this chapter.)

For the first time since the 1960s, the supply of teachers is a concern in Ontario. Without reliable information on teacher supply and demand, however, it is difficult to ensure that the appropriate number of teachers is available to teach in the subject areas where they are most needed. Better information about shortages and the reasons for them would help us devise better recruitment strategies.

The Ministry of Education has been working with a variety of partners in the education system to develop a better capacity to manage teacher supply and demand. We believe that this work should be expanded to ensure that a full range of information is available for analysis. We also believe that this work should become an ongoing partnership activity of the ministry and other province-wide education stakeholder organizations.

Recommendation 1: That the Ministry of Education and the Ontario College of Teachers:

a. develop a joint system, using their respective databases, to gather solid information (including information about the assignment of teachers to subjects and grades outside their area of qualifications, the extent of the use of emergency provisions for the hiring of uncertified teachers, and the extent of the use of letters of permission); and

b. use this information to provide sophisticated and reasonable advice to the appropriate ministers, the faculties of education, and district school boards on issues related to teacher supply and demand.

The Minister of Education, as we have noted, issues letters of permission, but the Ontario College of Teachers is responsible for other aspects of teacher certification. This situation has proved to be confusing and inefficient. We believe that all decisions related to teaching qualifications should be made by one regulatory board.

Recommendation 2: That, consistent with other duties of the Ontario College of Teachers, the Ministry of Education transfer authority for issuing letters of permission to the college.

Teacher education

> We need to ensure that there is consistency in our teacher education programs so that all of our new teachers are armed with the skills and knowledge that they need to teach.
>
> – Consultation participant

In all of our consultation sessions, we heard that people want to see improvements to faculty of education programs in Ontario. For example, we heard that teachers who are new to the profession need to be better prepared to teach the new curriculum and to respond to the needs of special-education students who are integrated into the classroom.

The credibility of our education system depends, in part, on high-quality teacher education programs. The authority to accredit these programs lies with the Ontario College of Teachers under the Ontario College of Teachers Act. Over the past three years, the college has conducted accreditation reviews of the 10 Ontario faculties of education, with the cooperation of the faculties.

The ministry and school boards should develop induction programs and performance evaluation systems that reflect the goals of the system.

– Consultation participant

Principals can help by timetabling teachers for success and putting their support behind a mentoring process.

– Consultation participant

At present, the faculties' participation in these reviews is voluntary. We believe that their participation should be mandatory, to ensure that they offer the best possible pre-service and in-service programs designed to meet the needs of Ontario's schools.

Recommendation 3: That the government approve a regulation governing the Ontario College of Teachers' accreditation of faculties of education as soon as possible.

Induction of teachers

The Ministry of Education has said that, as part of its teacher testing initiatives, it will develop an induction process for beginning teachers.[22] We support this initiative and urge the ministry to make it a priority.

The process should ensure that each beginner is mentored by an experienced staff member under the leadership of the school principal. Mentoring requires that the expert teacher have time to work with the beginning teacher. Some Ontario boards allocate this kind of time to teacher-mentors, and some also provide their schools with funding to allow beginning teachers to visit other schools and to participate in professional development activities.

Making these kinds of accommodations for beginning teachers and their mentors carries resource implications for schools, but the evidence from the boards that have implemented such processes is that the investment is worth while: Students get a higher quality of teaching from the beginner.[23]

Recommendation 4: That the Ministry of Education ensure that appropriate resources are provided through the education funding formula to cover the release time and training costs of *both* the new teachers *and* the mentors who will be involved in the formal induction system for beginning teachers that is part of the ministry's teacher testing initiative.

Teachers' assignments

In Grades 1 to 3, it makes sense, given the developmental stage of the students, to have a single teacher with a good liberal arts or science degree in charge of a class and delivering most of the curriculum. (An exception would be primary-level French, which, if offered, must be delivered by a specialist teacher.) In our view, however, this longstanding elementary school model should be reconsidered for Grades 4 to 6.

The Ministry of Education has been working with a variety of partners in the education system to develop a better capacity to manage teacher supply and demand. We believe that this work should be expanded to ensure that a full range of information is available for analysis. We also believe that this work should become an ongoing partnership activity of the ministry and other province-wide education stakeholder organizations.

Recommendation 1: That the Ministry of Education and the Ontario College of Teachers:

a. develop a joint system, using their respective databases, to gather solid information (including information about the assignment of teachers to subjects and grades outside their area of qualifications, the extent of the use of emergency provisions for the hiring of uncertified teachers, and the extent of the use of letters of permission); and

b. use this information to provide sophisticated and reasonable advice to the appropriate ministers, the faculties of education, and district school boards on issues related to teacher supply and demand.

The Minister of Education, as we have noted, issues letters of permission, but the Ontario College of Teachers is responsible for other aspects of teacher certification. This situation has proved to be confusing and inefficient. We believe that all decisions related to teaching qualifications should be made by one regulatory board.

Recommendation 2: That, consistent with other duties of the Ontario College of Teachers, the Ministry of Education transfer authority for issuing letters of permission to the college.

Teacher education

> We need to ensure that there is consistency in our teacher education programs so that all of our new teachers are armed with the skills and knowledge that they need to teach.
>
> – Consultation participant

In all of our consultation sessions, we heard that people want to see improvements to faculty of education programs in Ontario. For example, we heard that teachers who are new to the profession need to be better prepared to teach the new curriculum and to respond to the needs of special-education students who are integrated into the classroom.

The credibility of our education system depends, in part, on high-quality teacher education programs. The authority to accredit these programs lies with the Ontario College of Teachers under the Ontario College of Teachers Act. Over the past three years, the college has conducted accreditation reviews of the 10 Ontario faculties of education, with the cooperation of the faculties.

The ministry and school boards should develop induction programs and performance evaluation systems that reflect the goals of the system.

– Consultation participant

At present, the faculties' participation in these reviews is voluntary. We believe that their participation should be mandatory, to ensure that they offer the best possible pre-service and in-service programs designed to meet the needs of Ontario's schools.

Recommendation 3: That the government approve a regulation governing the Ontario College of Teachers' accreditation of faculties of education as soon as possible.

Principals can help by timetabling teachers for success and putting their support behind a mentoring process.

– Consultation participant

Induction of teachers

The Ministry of Education has said that, as part of its teacher testing initiatives, it will develop an induction process for beginning teachers.[22] We support this initiative and urge the ministry to make it a priority.

The process should ensure that each beginner is mentored by an experienced staff member under the leadership of the school principal. Mentoring requires that the expert teacher have time to work with the beginning teacher. Some Ontario boards allocate this kind of time to teacher-mentors, and some also provide their schools with funding to allow beginning teachers to visit other schools and to participate in professional development activities.

Making these kinds of accommodations for beginning teachers and their mentors carries resource implications for schools, but the evidence from the boards that have implemented such processes is that the investment is worth while: Students get a higher quality of teaching from the beginner.[23]

Recommendation 4: That the Ministry of Education ensure that appropriate resources are provided through the education funding formula to cover the release time and training costs of *both* the new teachers *and* the mentors who will be involved in the formal induction system for beginning teachers that is part of the ministry's teacher testing initiative.

Teachers' assignments

In Grades 1 to 3, it makes sense, given the developmental stage of the students, to have a single teacher with a good liberal arts or science degree in charge of a class and delivering most of the curriculum. (An exception would be primary-level French, which, if offered, must be delivered by a specialist teacher.) In our view, however, this longstanding elementary school model should be reconsidered for Grades 4 to 6.

In most elementary schools, a single teacher is expected to teach the nine discrete subject areas that make up the Grades 4 to 6 curriculum, to teach them well, and to integrate them appropriately. We believe that this is an unreasonable expectation unless there is no alternative, which may be the case in small and isolated schools.

Some schools allow elementary school teachers to teach in their areas of strength, so that one person may teach mathematics and science to a grade (or grades), while another teaches language arts and social studies to the same students. This method of organizing teachers to teach clusters of connected subjects that are within their expertise has merit, and we propose that it or a similar model be used, wherever possible, in elementary schools across the province.

Such a change would have a positive effect on student achievement. It would also help guide the faculties of education in defining the undergraduate qualifications that are prerequisites for their teacher education programs. Finally, it would make possible the development of practical and focused professional development activities for teachers.

We acknowledge that this is a significant change, and that it would have to be phased in over several years.

Recommendation 5: That the Ministry of Education encourage schools to organize teachers of Grades 4 to 6 to deliver clusters of connected subjects.

The province's curriculum reform has shifted certain subject matter from the secondary level into the elementary grades. This shift has had a considerable impact in Grades 7 and 8, where each subject in the new curriculum demands a high level of specialist knowledge from the teacher. As a result, there are urgent needs to increase the number of Grades 7 and 8 teachers with subject qualifications on their certifications and to consider how teachers are assigned in these grades. At this level, we believe that teachers should be teaching only in their areas of expertise.

Recommendation 6: That school boards ensure that teachers in Grades 7 and 8 are assigned to teach according to the subject qualifications listed on their certificates.

The research on effective schools makes a compelling argument for eliminating the practice of assigning teachers to teach grades and subjects that are outside their qualifications.[24] The participants in our consultations made it clear they

want the practice eliminated as well. It may be difficult to eliminate in small and isolated schools, but even there technology may provide at least a partial solution, and the exceptions should not become the rule.

Teachers should be assigned to teach only those subjects or grades that are listed on their certificates of qualification. If teachers choose to expand their qualifications, they can take programs that are available at the faculties of education. (Many do take these courses. See "Professional development for teachers," below.)

Students and their parents have a right to expect that teachers are qualified in the subjects they are assigned to teach. If exceptional circumstances exist, boards should ensure that appropriate professional development is completed *before* a teacher is assigned to a subject that does not appear on his or her certificate of qualification. Principals should be able to assure students and parents that a teacher who is assigned "out of field" (to use an American term) is capable of delivering the "best possible program," as the ministry requires.

To begin with, we need reliable information on the extent of the problem. Without this information, we do not know whether, or to what extent, the assignment of teachers to teach subjects that are outside of their qualifications is exacerbating the teacher supply problem.

Secondly, solutions to this problem must be well coordinated. Since the Ontario College of Teachers has the mandate to oversee teacher education, teacher qualifications, and professional development, the Ministry of Education may wish to transfer to the college the responsibility for overseeing the assignment of teachers to grades and subjects outside of their qualifications. This new responsibility would be consistent with the college's other responsibilities in this area.

Recommendation 7: That the Ministry of Education conduct an audit of the practice by district school boards of assigning teachers to grade levels and/or subjects that are not on their certificates of qualification, and that the information gathered be used for the purposes of evaluating the prevalence of the practice, determining its causes, and proposing solutions, including regulatory amendments, that support continuous school improvement.

Recommendation 8: That the Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the Ontario College of Teachers, examine the possibility of transferring responsibility to the college for regulating the assignment of certified teachers to grades and subjects outside of those in which they are qualified to teach.

In most elementary schools, a single teacher is expected to teach the nine discrete subject areas that make up the Grades 4 to 6 curriculum, to teach them well, and to integrate them appropriately. We believe that this is an unreasonable expectation unless there is no alternative, which may be the case in small and isolated schools.

Some schools allow elementary school teachers to teach in their areas of strength, so that one person may teach mathematics and science to a grade (or grades), while another teaches language arts and social studies to the same students. This method of organizing teachers to teach clusters of connected subjects that are within their expertise has merit, and we propose that it or a similar model be used, wherever possible, in elementary schools across the province.

Such a change would have a positive effect on student achievement. It would also help guide the faculties of education in defining the undergraduate qualifications that are prerequisites for their teacher education programs. Finally, it would make possible the development of practical and focused professional development activities for teachers.

We acknowledge that this is a significant change, and that it would have to be phased in over several years.

Recommendation 5: That the Ministry of Education encourage schools to organize teachers of Grades 4 to 6 to deliver clusters of connected subjects.

The province's curriculum reform has shifted certain subject matter from the secondary level into the elementary grades. This shift has had a considerable impact in Grades 7 and 8, where each subject in the new curriculum demands a high level of specialist knowledge from the teacher. As a result, there are urgent needs to increase the number of Grades 7 and 8 teachers with subject qualifications on their certifications and to consider how teachers are assigned in these grades. At this level, we believe that teachers should be teaching only in their areas of expertise.

Recommendation 6: That school boards ensure that teachers in Grades 7 and 8 are assigned to teach according to the subject qualifications listed on their certificates.

The research on effective schools makes a compelling argument for eliminating the practice of assigning teachers to teach grades and subjects that are outside their qualifications.[24] The participants in our consultations made it clear they

want the practice eliminated as well. It may be difficult to eliminate in small and isolated schools, but even there technology may provide at least a partial solution, and the exceptions should not become the rule.

Teachers should be assigned to teach only those subjects or grades that are listed on their certificates of qualification. If teachers choose to expand their qualifications, they can take programs that are available at the faculties of education. (Many do take these courses. See "Professional development for teachers," below.)

Students and their parents have a right to expect that teachers are qualified in the subjects they are assigned to teach. If exceptional circumstances exist, boards should ensure that appropriate professional development is completed *before* a teacher is assigned to a subject that does not appear on his or her certificate of qualification. Principals should be able to assure students and parents that a teacher who is assigned "out of field" (to use an American term) is capable of delivering the "best possible program," as the ministry requires.

To begin with, we need reliable information on the extent of the problem. Without this information, we do not know whether, or to what extent, the assignment of teachers to teach subjects that are outside of their qualifications is exacerbating the teacher supply problem.

Secondly, solutions to this problem must be well coordinated. Since the Ontario College of Teachers has the mandate to oversee teacher education, teacher qualifications, and professional development, the Ministry of Education may wish to transfer to the college the responsibility for overseeing the assignment of teachers to grades and subjects outside of their qualifications. This new responsibility would be consistent with the college's other responsibilities in this area.

Recommendation 7: That the Ministry of Education conduct an audit of the practice by district school boards of assigning teachers to grade levels and/or subjects that are not on their certificates of qualification, and that the information gathered be used for the purposes of evaluating the prevalence of the practice, determining its causes, and proposing solutions, including regulatory amendments, that support continuous school improvement.

Recommendation 8: That the Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the Ontario College of Teachers, examine the possibility of transferring responsibility to the college for regulating the assignment of certified teachers to grades and subjects outside of those in which they are qualified to teach.

Professional development for teachers

It is time to make an investment in in-service training, especially for critical subject areas such as math, science, and literacy.

– Consultation participant

Professional development for teachers is one of the keys to ensuring excellence in teaching. Professional development courses, activities, and training must be well designed and targeted to meet the current and anticipated needs of both individual teachers and the education system as a whole.

When we talk about meeting professional development needs, we mean creating an environment in schools and in the entire education system that supports continuous learning. This environment would see all school and board staff members (teaching and non-teaching) participating in learning and training activities that are appropriate to their individual professional needs and to the needs of their students and school. The process would begin with the induction of teachers, which we have discussed above, and continue throughout a teacher's (or other staff member's) career.

While there is, at present, a lack of adequate information about the professional development needs of teachers, we can identify some areas of probable need. The vast majority of elementary school teachers have degrees in the social sciences, but neither these degrees nor their teacher training have prepared them to deliver the new rigorous, content-laden elementary curriculum. Secondary school teachers also face new demands, including the new rigorous secondary curriculum and the need to respond to the results of the Grade 9 mathematics and Grade 10 literacy tests administered by the Education Quality and Accountability Office. Recent graduate teachers will be better prepared to meet these demands, but current teaching staff needs to be trained to meet these demands as well.

Possibly the most important single factor in school effectiveness is the quality of teaching. Education, however, is far more than the sum of individual teachers. It is a collective enterprise involving the whole school, the wider community and the education authority. It demands good leadership and sound management which have a significant effect on pupils' learning.

– Scottish Education Department, HM Inspectors of Schools, *Effective Secondary Schools* (Edinburgh: HM Stationery Office, 1988), i.

Summer institutes funded by the Ministry of Education and jointly sponsored by the ministry and the Ontario Teachers' Federation are valued and well attended. We also know that each year an average of 24,500 teachers take the additional-qualification programs offered by the faculties of education.[25] Since the fees for these 125-hour courses range from $700 to $900, this means that teachers are spending approximately $20 million of their own money on these courses each year. This level of professional development, while substantial, is still not enough to meet the full range of needs. Besides taking additional-qualification courses, to cope with continuous change teachers must also receive in-service training on a regular basis, in their own schools and boards as well as in central locations.

In its final report, the Education Improvement Commission compared Conference Board of Canada statistics on investment in professional development and training. Across all employment sectors, the average amount spent per employee was $776, or 1.6 per cent of payroll. In the health and education sectors, the average amount spent per employee was $423.[26]

The Ministry of Education, through its education funding formula, provides boards with considerable support for professional development. In addition, a recent announcement by the ministry includes support for training teachers in strategies to improve the reading skills of young students.[27] But more funding is needed.

We believe that the underfunding of training and professional development in the education sector is shortsighted. Investment in continuous professional development aimed at improving teachers' expertise in their subject areas and teaching techniques is a necessary building block for school improvement.

> Teaching and non-teaching staff work as a team to make schools the best they can be for kids. We can't overlook the value of professional development and training for all staff in the school.
>
> – Consultation participant

Michael Fullan, dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto, is respected internationally for his work on building effective schools through constructive change. He describes the school as a "professional learning community."[28] This description implies that other members of the school staff—teacher assistants and other support staff—also require professional development, so that they can contribute to the process of continuous improvement. We support this view.

Recommendation 9: That the Ministry of Education increase its level of support for professional development within the education funding formula to an amount equal to 1.6 per cent of the payroll of district school boards, and that it require boards to use these funds exclusively for the professional development of their employees.

Recommendation 10: That the Ministry of Education, in consultation with the entire education community, review the school year calendar to determine how professional development for teachers and other school staff, targeted at improving the level of student achievement, can be organized and the appropriate time and resources dedicated to it.

As part of its teacher testing program, the ministry will require teachers to participate in professional development programs to maintain their certification. We support this initiative, but urge that its driving force be a commitment to the continuous improvement of student achievement. The requirements that are being developed should encompass training and professional development activities undertaken in support of school and board improvement planning. Ontario must avoid the situation that exists in many jurisdictions, where recertification requirements simply involve attendance at isolated training events selected more for their convenience than for their direct connection to school and board improvement.

The Ministry of Education, through its education funding formula, provides boards with considerable support for professional development. In addition, a recent announcement by the ministry includes support for training teachers in strategies to improve the reading skills of young students.[27] But more funding is needed.

We believe that the underfunding of training and professional development in the education sector is shortsighted. Investment in continuous professional development aimed at improving teachers' expertise in their subject areas and teaching techniques is a necessary building block for school improvement.

Teaching and non-teaching staff work as a team to make schools the best they can be for kids. We can't overlook the value of professional development and training for all staff in the school.

– Consultation participant

Michael Fullan, dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto, is respected internationally for his work on building effective schools through constructive change. He describes the school as a "professional learning community."[28] This description implies that other members of the school staff—teacher assistants and other support staff—also require professional development, so that they can contribute to the process of continuous improvement. We support this view.

Recommendation 9: That the Ministry of Education increase its level of support for professional development within the education funding formula to an amount equal to 1.6 per cent of the payroll of district school boards, and that it require boards to use these funds exclusively for the professional development of their employees.

Recommendation 10: That the Ministry of Education, in consultation with the entire education community, review the school year calendar to determine how professional development for teachers and other school staff, targeted at improving the level of student achievement, can be organized and the appropriate time and resources dedicated to it.

As part of its teacher testing program, the ministry will require teachers to participate in professional development programs to maintain their certification. We support this initiative, but urge that its driving force be a commitment to the continuous improvement of student achievement. The requirements that are being developed should encompass training and professional development activities undertaken in support of school and board improvement planning. Ontario must avoid the situation that exists in many jurisdictions, where recertification requirements simply involve attendance at isolated training events selected more for their convenience than for their direct connection to school and board improvement.

Recommendation 11: That the Ministry of Education, in developing the framework for the requirement that teachers participate in professional development programs to maintain their certification, ensure that the framework is flexible enough to encompass the learning needs of teachers that are related to board and school improvement plans.

Exemplary teachers

If teaching is to attract exemplary candidates, the profession must be respected for its contributions to society. To be attractive, a profession must have status, public support, competitive salaries, and reasonable working conditions. We must understand that we are operating in a highly competitive milieu. Other countries have recognized this issue, and dealt with it.

Every year, Ontario school boards have to compete with recruiters from other jurisdictions, such as the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and some U.S. states. Bilingual graduate teachers are recruited by the federal civil service. Other graduate teachers are lured into business and industry sectors by the prospects of high salaries.

Aside from the need to compete, there is an urgent need to boost the morale of the profession, which by all accounts feels battered and bruised. We are heartened by the Minister of Education's stated intention to resolve some of the outstanding workload issues with the teachers' federations, but much more needs to be done to restore teacher morale.

> You cannot attract high-calibre people to a profession which has been subjected to unabated denigration and demoralization.
>
> – Andy Hargreaves and Michael Fullan, *What's Worth Fighting for Out There?* (Toronto: Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation, 1998), 123.

As a start, we propose that the Ministry of Education develop a program to identify, recognize, and reward exemplary classroom teachers. As we envisage it, it would involve the establishment of a selection committee and the publication of a set of criteria for exemplary status, such as the following:

- demonstrated exemplary teaching skills, as identified by a staff evaluation system in place in the school
- a commitment to improving levels of student achievement
- strong contributions to student life outside of the classroom
- demonstrated excellence in ability to communicate with parents
- contributions to the professional life of the school through leadership in such areas as developing and planning the implementation of curriculum and sharing effective teaching strategies and assessment techniques
- contributions to the teaching profession and to improvement in the level of student achievement at the board level and/or at the provincial level
- commitment to their own program of continuous professional development.

Nominations, with appropriate documentation, would be invited on an annual basis from parents and professional colleagues. A selection process would be established to review nominations and to select teachers to be recognized with exemplary status.

The teachers who achieve this status will be role models for prospective teachers, for beginning teachers, and for their colleagues.

We believe that, in addition to public recognition, exemplary teachers should receive a financial package that they would be required to use for the following purposes:

- to support their own professional development needs
- to share their insights and best practices with their colleagues—for example, at an annual symposium sponsored by the ministry.

This exemplary teacher recognition program should be developed by the Ministry of Education in partnership with others groups, including the Ontario College of Teachers, trustees' associations, teachers' federations, provincial parent groups such as the Ontario Parent Council, provincial education organizations, and private sector partners. Such a program would give the Minister of Education an opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to building respect for teachers and to celebrating their excellence.

Recommendation 12: That the Ministry of Education, in partnership with the Ontario College of Teachers, trustees' associations, teachers' federations, provincial parent and education organizations, and the private sector develop a program to identify, recognize, and reward exemplary teachers in a way that would publicize the work of these teachers and promote the sharing of their best practices to foster continuous school improvement.

Recommendation 13: That the Ministry of Education, in partnership with the Ontario College of Teachers, trustees' associations, teachers' federations, provincial parent and education organizations, and the private sector sponsor an annual symposium featuring the work of exemplary teachers, as one way of publicizing successful efforts to improve schools.

The Effective Principal

Today's principal is a manager of change. Many of the traditional roles remain—implementing board policy, managing staff, looking after playgrounds, acting as public relations agent for the school, ensuring that extracurricular programs are staffed, and so on. But schooling is changing dramatically. The

Recommendation 11: That the Ministry of Education, in developing the framework for the requirement that teachers participate in professional development programs to maintain their certification, ensure that the framework is flexible enough to encompass the learning needs of teachers that are related to board and school improvement plans.

Exemplary teachers

If teaching is to attract exemplary candidates, the profession must be respected for its contributions to society. To be attractive, a profession must have status, public support, competitive salaries, and reasonable working conditions. We must understand that we are operating in a highly competitive milieu. Other countries have recognized this issue, and dealt with it.

Every year, Ontario school boards have to compete with recruiters from other jurisdictions, such as the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and some U.S. states. Bilingual graduate teachers are recruited by the federal civil service. Other graduate teachers are lured into business and industry sectors by the prospects of high salaries.

> You cannot attract high-calibre people to a profession which has been subjected to unabated denigration and demoralization.
>
> – Andy Hargreaves and Michael Fullan, *What's Worth Fighting for Out There?* (Toronto: Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation, 1998), 123.

Aside from the need to compete, there is an urgent need to boost the morale of the profession, which by all accounts feels battered and bruised. We are heartened by the Minister of Education's stated intention to resolve some of the outstanding workload issues with the teachers' federations, but much more needs to be done to restore teacher morale.

As a start, we propose that the Ministry of Education develop a program to identify, recognize, and reward exemplary classroom teachers. As we envisage it, it would involve the establishment of a selection committee and the publication of a set of criteria for exemplary status, such as the following:

- demonstrated exemplary teaching skills, as identified by a staff evaluation system in place in the school
- a commitment to improving levels of student achievement
- strong contributions to student life outside of the classroom
- demonstrated excellence in ability to communicate with parents
- contributions to the professional life of the school through leadership in such areas as developing and planning the implementation of curriculum and sharing effective teaching strategies and assessment techniques
- contributions to the teaching profession and to improvement in the level of student achievement at the board level and/or at the provincial level
- commitment to their own program of continuous professional development.

Nominations, with appropriate documentation, would be invited on an annual basis from parents and professional colleagues. A selection process would be established to review nominations and to select teachers to be recognized with exemplary status.

The teachers who achieve this status will be role models for prospective teachers, for beginning teachers, and for their colleagues.

We believe that, in addition to public recognition, exemplary teachers should receive a financial package that they would be required to use for the following purposes:

- to support their own professional development needs
- to share their insights and best practices with their colleagues—for example, at an annual symposium sponsored by the ministry.

This exemplary teacher recognition program should be developed by the Ministry of Education in partnership with others groups, including the Ontario College of Teachers, trustees' associations, teachers' federations, provincial parent groups such as the Ontario Parent Council, provincial education organizations, and private sector partners. Such a program would give the Minister of Education an opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to building respect for teachers and to celebrating their excellence.

Recommendation 12: That the Ministry of Education, in partnership with the Ontario College of Teachers, trustees' associations, teachers' federations, provincial parent and education organizations, and the private sector develop a program to identify, recognize, and reward exemplary teachers in a way that would publicize the work of these teachers and promote the sharing of their best practices to foster continuous school improvement.

Recommendation 13: That the Ministry of Education, in partnership with the Ontario College of Teachers, trustees' associations, teachers' federations, provincial parent and education organizations, and the private sector sponsor an annual symposium featuring the work of exemplary teachers, as one way of publicizing successful efforts to improve schools.

The Effective Principal

Today's principal is a manager of change. Many of the traditional roles remain—implementing board policy, managing staff, looking after playgrounds, acting as public relations agent for the school, ensuring that extracurricular programs are staffed, and so on. But schooling is changing dramatically. The

Principals know that effective schools depend on teacher expertise, and they promote effectiveness by celebrating teacher success or providing extra assistance.

– Consultation participant

student population is more diverse and will be even more so in the future. Information technology will change many aspects of instruction and program delivery. Schools themselves are increasingly centres for the delivery of community services. All of these changes have ramifications for the responsibilities of a principal.

Student learning, however, is the reason schools exist. It is the priority underlying everything an effective principal does as leader of a learning community. The effective principal understands that the essence of his or her job is to be "the principal teacher." In this role the principal works with teachers to ensure that the curriculum is delivered, that student assessment data is used as a tool to improve the achievement levels of individual students, and that the school is a welcoming and safe place for all.

Principals need time to provide the leadership required to ensure the implementation of provincial education reforms at the local school level. Principals and teachers need time to work together on professional development activities focusing on curriculum, teaching and learning strategies, and improved student achievement.

– Consultation participants

Too often principals are called away from their schools for central administrative meetings or to work on board committees. Absentee principals cannot lead. To effectively carry out their role as "principal teachers," principals must be in their schools and classrooms on a regular basis.

The complex role of the principal requires that all principals' positions be filled with highly qualified candidates. But there is mounting evidence that district school boards are having difficulty attracting capable candidates for the positions of principal and vice-principal.[29] The underlying issues of this situation are as complex as they are elsewhere in our education system, but the issue of school leadership cannot be allowed to drift if we are to maintain the momentum of productive change.

We believe that the province must bring consistency of vision to this critical role through a comprehensive review of the job description of principals. Such a review, and any necessary changes arising out of it, would ensure that all principals in Ontario schools are capable of providing the leadership that our schools need in these times of change.

Recommendation 14: That the Ministry of Education, in cooperation with major education organizations, commission a review of the role of the principal, and that this review cover a range of issues that includes job description, recruitment, retention, expectations, and financial and other incentives, with a view to ensuring that the job remains attractive to high-quality candidates.

Because principals will continue to work at the centre of change, it is vital that the course through which they qualify for a principal's position and the professional development available to them afterwards equip them to meet, and to help their schools meet, the challenges associated with change.

The ministry intends to include principals in the recertification requirements that are part of its teacher testing initiatives. We believe that principals and academic supervisory officers should face the same recertification requirements as teachers. By this we mean that, as a condition of maintaining their principals' or supervisory officers' certification, they should be required to undertake professional development through accredited programs that are aimed at helping them excel in their leadership, managerial, and supervisory roles, so that they can support the improvement of student achievement. Such a requirement would assure the public that principals and academic supervisory officers are as accountable for their performance as the teachers they supervise.

Such requirements will, of course, necessitate the development and accreditation of a wider range of programs than presently exist.

Recommendation 15: That:

a. the Ministry of Education include principals and all academic supervisory officers in its plan to base recertification in part on professional development; and

b. the Ontario College of Teachers ensure that the principal's course, academic supervisory officer's course, and accredited professional learning programs for principals and academic supervisory officers meet and anticipate the changing needs of their professional roles.

Before we move on to the next chapter, we want to express our strong support for the teachers, principals, and other professionals who provide expert service to our students and their parents, often in difficult and challenging circumstances, and too often without recognition or praise. These people deserve our thanks and our respect.

As Michael Fullan was quoted as saying in a recent edition of *Maclean's* magazine, "Educational reform is doomed without comprehensive support for those on the ground."[30]

Principals know that effective schools depend on teacher expertise, and they promote effectiveness by celebrating teacher success or providing extra assistance.

– Consultation participant

student population is more diverse and will be even more so in the future. Information technology will change many aspects of instruction and program delivery. Schools themselves are increasingly centres for the delivery of community services. All of these changes have ramifications for the responsibilities of a principal.

Student learning, however, is the reason schools exist. It is the priority underlying everything an effective principal does as leader of a learning community. The effective principal understands that the essence of his or her job is to be "the principal teacher." In this role the principal works with teachers to ensure that the curriculum is delivered, that student assessment data is used as a tool to improve the achievement levels of individual students, and that the school is a welcoming and safe place for all.

Principals need time to provide the leadership required to ensure the implementation of provincial education reforms at the local school level. Principals and teachers need time to work together on professional development activities focusing on curriculum, teaching and learning strategies, and improved student achievement.

– Consultation participants

Too often principals are called away from their schools for central administrative meetings or to work on board committees. Absentee principals cannot lead. To effectively carry out their role as "principal teachers," principals must be in their schools and classrooms on a regular basis.

The complex role of the principal requires that all principals' positions be filled with highly qualified candidates. But there is mounting evidence that district school boards are having difficulty attracting capable candidates for the positions of principal and vice-principal.[29] The underlying issues of this situation are as complex as they are elsewhere in our education system, but the issue of school leadership cannot be allowed to drift if we are to maintain the momentum of productive change.

We believe that the province must bring consistency of vision to this critical role through a comprehensive review of the job description of principals. Such a review, and any necessary changes arising out of it, would ensure that all principals in Ontario schools are capable of providing the leadership that our schools need in these times of change.

Recommendation 14: That the Ministry of Education, in cooperation with major education organizations, commission a review of the role of the principal, and that this review cover a range of issues that includes job description, recruitment, retention, expectations, and financial and other incentives, with a view to ensuring that the job remains attractive to high-quality candidates.

Because principals will continue to work at the centre of change, it is vital that the course through which they qualify for a principal's position and the professional development available to them afterwards equip them to meet, and to help their schools meet, the challenges associated with change.

The ministry intends to include principals in the recertification requirements that are part of its teacher testing initiatives. We believe that principals and academic supervisory officers should face the same recertification requirements as teachers. By this we mean that, as a condition of maintaining their principals' or supervisory officers' certification, they should be required to undertake professional development through accredited programs that are aimed at helping them excel in their leadership, managerial, and supervisory roles, so that they can support the improvement of student achievement. Such a requirement would assure the public that principals and academic supervisory officers are as accountable for their performance as the teachers they supervise.

Such requirements will, of course, necessitate the development and accreditation of a wider range of programs than presently exist.

Recommendation 15: That:

a. the Ministry of Education include principals and all academic supervisory officers in its plan to base recertification in part on professional development; and

b. the Ontario College of Teachers ensure that the principal's course, academic supervisory officer's course, and accredited professional learning programs for principals and academic supervisory officers meet and anticipate the changing needs of their professional roles.

Before we move on to the next chapter, we want to express our strong support for the teachers, principals, and other professionals who provide expert service to our students and their parents, often in difficult and challenging circumstances, and too often without recognition or praise. These people deserve our thanks and our respect.

As Michael Fullan was quoted as saying in a recent edition of *Maclean's* magazine, "Educational reform is doomed without comprehensive support for those on the ground."[30]

4. Recognizing School Improvement

If "it's all about improvement," then individual schools should be recognized for improving the level of their students' achievement. But before we can do that, we have to define "student achievement" and find a way to measure its improvement.

Before we can measure improvement, we need to decide what information about student achievement and schools we should gather in order to take these measurements. Then we need to obtain and accumulate this information, ensuring that it is reliable, relevant, and consistent. We also need to publish it, making it available to parents, teachers, schools, boards, and other stakeholders in our education system. Only then will we be able to measure improvement and recognize schools that have demonstrated improvement in the level of their students' achievement.

In Ontario, we have begun to address this challenge, but much more remains to be done. For example, we lag behind jurisdictions in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and other parts of Canada in our ability to measure and describe student achievement levels.[31] While we have the advantage of being able to examine this work and learn from these experiences, we urgently need to establish an agenda for the development of a comprehensive accountability framework here in Ontario, and get on with the job.

The Need for Information

If one persistent theme emerged from our consultations, it was the belief that the effectiveness of schools and improvement in student achievement cannot be evaluated solely in terms of province-wide assessments in language and mathematics. We agree.

In prefaces to its curriculum documents, the Ministry of Education states that the school program is designed to prepare students for a "lifetime of learning" and provide them with the "knowledge and skills that will help them compete in a global economy and allow them to lead lives of integrity and satisfaction, both as citizens and individuals."[32]

In addition to these ministry-defined purposes for the education program, as we noted in chapter 2, schools in the Catholic systems make the Catholic faith central to their education programs and schools in the French-language systems add a focus on preserving and enhancing French language, culture, and institutions. In fact, each school has different needs and characteristics that influence the way it defines effectiveness. These various priorities and needs, in addition to those outlined in the ministry's curriculum documents, have implications for our concepts of effective schools and student achievement.

As we also discussed in chapter 2, an effective school sets a wide range of learning and developmental goals for students. It does not focus simply on subjects measured by province-wide tests. Should we therefore stop conducting these tests, since they assess only a narrow band of learning activity? Obviously not. They provide meaningful information about our schools, information that we are obligated to provide to our communities, but they should not be the only way we evaluate schools.

When assessing the characteristics of effective schools, therefore, we must do the following:

- develop standardized data about student achievement that reflects important and central goals for student learning and development
- ensure that learning and development goals for students are not compromised by focusing solely on the subjects measured by province-wide tests
- ensure that our province-wide tests and all the information we gather and publish is focused on *improvement*.

> Test scores shouldn't be used to rank schools; they should be used as the basis for improving the achievement of individual students.
>
> – Consultation participant

We agree with the views expressed by researchers and those who participated in our consultations: We will never be able to know whether our schools are meeting the rich variety of goals and purposes that the province has set for them and that they have set for themselves solely through the collection of information related to a few, albeit important, indicators of student performance. How, then, are we to answer the perfectly valid question asked by students and parents, "How good is our school?"

We support the current system of province-wide tests administered by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO). These tests provide Ontarians with information that we can use to hold schools, school boards, and the Ministry of Education accountable for student achievement.

At present, at the elementary level, the EQAO tests language and mathematics achievement in Grades 3 and 6. At the secondary level, it administers a Grade 10 literacy test (beginning in 2001–02, students will have to pass this test in order to graduate) and it has just begun administering a Grade 9 mathematics test. The results of all these tests are made public by EQAO on a school-by-school basis.

The current language and mathematics tests for Grades 3 and 6 students provide us with information about subjects that are widely accepted as central to all learning. (Research establishes a clear link between writing and other subjects in the curriculum.[33]) If we set out to improve the levels of student achievement in just these two areas, it would considerably benefit our students. Other jurisdictions are proving that, with the right commitments and investments, significant improvements can be achieved within relatively short time frames.

The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy in England and Wales is a case in point. It shows that challenging targets can be set and met on a large scale.

In 1996, nearly half the students in these two countries did not meet national expectations for achievement levels in language and mathematics. The same is true of today's Grade 6 students in Ontario, according to EQAO results. In response to the 1996 results, the British government set an ambitious target: by 2002, 80 per cent of students would be at or above the expected standard in language, and 75 per cent would be at or above the expected standard in mathematics. A National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy was put in place to support and provide resources to meet these challenging targets.

By the year 2000, 75 per cent of the students had achieved the national expectations in language, and 72 per cent in mathematics. There is no doubt that by 2002 they will have met or exceeded their targets.[34]

Most jurisdictions, like Ontario, collect information about the achievements of elementary school students in language and mathematics. Many jurisdictions also test students in science. The government recently announced that it will expand province-wide testing to all grades. As part of this initiative, we think that Ontario's elementary school students should be assessed in science. In order not to focus too narrowly on Grades 3 and 6, however, science testing might best be implemented in Grades 4 and 8.

Recommendation 16: That the Ministry of Education direct the Education Quality and Accountability Office to conduct province-wide tests to assess the level of achievement in science of students in Grades 4 and 8.

But to thoroughly assess the effectiveness of schools and measure student achievement, we need a much more well-rounded set of data than is provided by the EQAO assessments alone. At the secondary level, for example, we know

At present, at the elementary level, the EQAO tests language and mathematics achievement in Grades 3 and 6. At the secondary level, it administers a Grade 10 literacy test (beginning in 2001–02, students will have to pass this test in order to graduate) and it has just begun administering a Grade 9 mathematics test. The results of all these tests are made public by EQAO on a school-by-school basis.

The current language and mathematics tests for Grades 3 and 6 students provide us with information about subjects that are widely accepted as central to all learning. (Research establishes a clear link between writing and other subjects in the curriculum.[33]) If we set out to improve the levels of student achievement in just these two areas, it would considerably benefit our students. Other jurisdictions are proving that, with the right commitments and investments, significant improvements can be achieved within relatively short time frames.

The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy in England and Wales is a case in point. It shows that challenging targets can be set and met on a large scale.

In 1996, nearly half the students in these two countries did not meet national expectations for achievement levels in language and mathematics. The same is true of today's Grade 6 students in Ontario, according to EQAO results. In response to the 1996 results, the British government set an ambitious target: by 2002, 80 per cent of students would be at or above the expected standard in language, and 75 per cent would be at or above the expected standard in mathematics. A National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy was put in place to support and provide resources to meet these challenging targets.

By the year 2000, 75 per cent of the students had achieved the national expectations in language, and 72 per cent in mathematics. There is no doubt that by 2002 they will have met or exceeded their targets.[34]

Most jurisdictions, like Ontario, collect information about the achievements of elementary school students in language and mathematics. Many jurisdictions also test students in science. The government recently announced that it will expand province-wide testing to all grades. As part of this initiative, we think that Ontario's elementary school students should be assessed in science. In order not to focus too narrowly on Grades 3 and 6, however, science testing might best be implemented in Grades 4 and 8.

Recommendation 16: That the Ministry of Education direct the Education Quality and Accountability Office to conduct province-wide tests to assess the level of achievement in science of students in Grades 4 and 8.

But to thoroughly assess the effectiveness of schools and measure student achievement, we need a much more well-rounded set of data than is provided by the EQAO assessments alone. At the secondary level, for example, we know

almost nothing on a province-wide basis about achievement levels. The available information comes from teachers and from examinations set by individual schools, and very often by individual teachers. The new Grade 9 math test and the Grade 10 literacy test administered by the EQAO will tell us more about students' elementary education than about their achievements at the secondary level.

Accountability demands that we apply the same rigorous student assessment standards to secondary schools that we apply to elementary schools. We urgently need to develop appropriate tests and other information-gathering tools for the secondary level and make the results publicly available. For example:

- We are in the second year of a major curriculum reform at the secondary level. By September 2003, we will have effectively eliminated the "advanced," "general," and "basic" credit levels and implemented a more rigorous program. Many educators and parents are worried that these changes will lead to higher dropout levels. Others are convinced that the new higher standards will benefit our students. How will we know the impact of these major changes on our students and schools without consistent, accurate, public information on credit-accumulation and graduation rates?
- Over the past 15 years, almost all secondary schools have adopted semestered timetables, whereby students take half their subjects in the first half of the year and the remaining subjects in the second half. We have adopted this system, however, with little or no hard information on a school-by-school basis of its effect on student achievement. How do we know if this move has been successful?

Any information shared about schools should be for the benefit of students.

– Consultation participant

We need to be able to quickly track the effect of significant organizational changes on achievement levels so as to respond, when necessary, on a timely basis and in appropriate ways.

What information should we have about secondary school performance? The indicators of performance that we choose must be central to the goals of our schools. We have noted that not all aspects of effective schools can be assessed with province-wide tests. In addition to the information provided by those tests, we also need information on a school-by-school basis about secondary school graduation, dropout, and credit-accumulation rates; destination after graduation; attendance; and safety. We should also develop simple surveys (at both the elementary and secondary levels) to assess the degree to which students and parents feel satisfied, supported, and encouraged by their schools. And we should publish this information and the results of these surveys.[35]

None of the data collection proposed above requires more student testing, but it would yield important information and, in time, contribute to significant improvement. With concrete information on the indicators cited above, we could, for example, set about improving secondary school graduation rates, credit-accumulation rates, attendance, and the degree to which students and parents feel connected to and supported by their schools.

Without good "hard data" on school performance, accountability will not work either for policy makers or for the educational marketplace.

– Joe Nathan and Nicola Johnson, *What Should We Do? A Practical Guide to Assessment and Accountability in Schools* (Minneapolis: Center for School Change, University of Minnesota, 2000), <www.hhh.umn.edu/centers/school-change/abhome.htm>.

We want to make it clear that we understand that too much information can be overwhelming, leading to paralysis rather than improvement. The information gathered about Ontario's schools should be carefully focused and meaningful. We believe that the performance indicators we have suggested above meet those criteria.

Once we have key performance data about every school, it should be published, in the form of school report cards. We have developed, and included at the end of this report, sample report cards for two fictitious schools—an English-language Catholic elementary school and an English-language secondary school. (The French-language version of this report has appended to it fictitious report cards for a French-language elementary school and a French-language Catholic secondary school.) In developing these sample report cards, we were assisted by some good examples now in use in schools across the province.

We conducted a limited consultation on our sample school report cards with some student and parent representatives, education-sector workers, principals, and trustees, as well as our advisory group, and we considered their suggestions in developing the final format of the cards appended to this report. While we have given careful consideration to the indicators that should be reflected in report cards and have received valuable input from our consultation on our samples, we recommend that a wider consultation be conducted to build on our work and further refine the report cards.

The performance data that is gathered and published in school report cards should be aggregated for each district school board and for the province as a whole, and then it too should be published, in the form of board report cards and a provincial report card.

Recommendation 17: That the Ministry of Education define a set of key indicators of student achievement for both elementary and secondary schools, and that the indicators include those listed on page 28 of this report, as well as those outlined in the sample report cards at the end of this report.

Recommendation 18: That the Ministry of Education take appropriate steps to ensure that the key indicators of student achievement described in recommendation 17 are reported, reliably and consistently, for each school in the form of a school report card; for each district school board in the form of a board report card; and for the province in the form of a provincial report card.

Recommendation 19: That the Ministry of Education, through its education funding formula, provide sufficient funding to boards and schools to support the collection and publication of consistent and reliable data on the key indicators of student achievement described in recommendation 17.

Recommendation 20: That the Ministry of Education set challenging improvement targets for the key indicators of student achievement described in recommendation 17, and focus on helping boards and schools achieve these targets.

Once we have established a set of focused, meaningful performance indicators for elementary and for secondary schools, gathered the data, and developed and published school, board, and provincial report cards, we will be in a better position to hold schools, boards, and the Ministry of Education accountable for improvement.

Since we need more than one year of consistent, reliable, and accurate information about student performance to make valid assessments about school improvement—or the lack of it—we must move quickly to develop the capacity to collect this information. Other jurisdictions, including Quebec, California, and the United Kingdom, have been collecting and analysing this kind of information for years, and they now have strong bases for making real improvements.[36]

Because we already have two years of consistent information from the Grades 3 and 6 EQAO test results, we are closer to meeting this goal for elementary schools than we are for secondary schools.

School Improvement Planning and Reviews

We argued in the introduction to this report that large-scale, province-wide improvements in student achievement will most readily be attained if there is both pressure on the system (for example, in the form of a strong accountability framework) and support (for example, an investment in building the capacity of schools to improve).

First and foremost, we need a province-wide, mandated system of school and board self-evaluation and improvement planning processes. The system we envisage would combine school and board self-evaluations with reviews by an independent agency. The independent agency would review a sampling of schools, primarily in connection with its reviews of boards, and it would conduct its board reviews on a cyclical basis. We discuss school reviews in this chapter and board reviews in chapter 6.

Without good "hard data" on school performance, accountability will not work either for policy makers or for the educational marketplace.

– Joe Nathan and Nicola Johnson, *What Should We Do? A Practical Guide to Assessment and Accountability in Schools* (Minneapolis: Center for School Change, University of Minnesota, 2000), <www.hhh.umn.edu/centers/school-change/abhome.htm>.

We want to make it clear that we understand that too much information can be overwhelming, leading to paralysis rather than improvement. The information gathered about Ontario's schools should be carefully focused and meaningful. We believe that the performance indicators we have suggested above meet those criteria.

Once we have key performance data about every school, it should be published, in the form of school report cards. We have developed, and included at the end of this report, sample report cards for two fictitious schools—an English-language Catholic elementary school and an English-language secondary school. (The French-language version of this report has appended to it fictitious report cards for a French-language elementary school and a French-language Catholic secondary school.) In developing these sample report cards, we were assisted by some good examples now in use in schools across the province.

We conducted a limited consultation on our sample school report cards with some student and parent representatives, education-sector workers, principals, and trustees, as well as our advisory group, and we considered their suggestions in developing the final format of the cards appended to this report. While we have given careful consideration to the indicators that should be reflected in report cards and have received valuable input from our consultation on our samples, we recommend that a wider consultation be conducted to build on our work and further refine the report cards.

The performance data that is gathered and published in school report cards should be aggregated for each district school board and for the province as a whole, and then it too should be published, in the form of board report cards and a provincial report card.

Recommendation 17: That the Ministry of Education define a set of key indicators of student achievement for both elementary and secondary schools, and that the indicators include those listed on page 28 of this report, as well as those outlined in the sample report cards at the end of this report.

Recommendation 18: That the Ministry of Education take appropriate steps to ensure that the key indicators of student achievement described in recommendation 17 are reported, reliably and consistently, for each school in the form of a school report card; for each district school board in the form of a board report card; and for the province in the form of a provincial report card.

Recommendation 19: That the Ministry of Education, through its education funding formula, provide sufficient funding to boards and schools to support the collection and publication of consistent and reliable data on the key indicators of student achievement described in recommendation 17.

Recommendation 20: That the Ministry of Education set challenging improvement targets for the key indicators of student achievement described in recommendation 17, and focus on helping boards and schools achieve these targets.

Once we have established a set of focused, meaningful performance indicators for elementary and for secondary schools, gathered the data, and developed and published school, board, and provincial report cards, we will be in a better position to hold schools, boards, and the Ministry of Education accountable for improvement.

Since we need more than one year of consistent, reliable, and accurate information about student performance to make valid assessments about school improvement—or the lack of it—we must move quickly to develop the capacity to collect this information. Other jurisdictions, including Quebec, California, and the United Kingdom, have been collecting and analysing this kind of information for years, and they now have strong bases for making real improvements.[36]

Because we already have two years of consistent information from the Grades 3 and 6 EQAO test results, we are closer to meeting this goal for elementary schools than we are for secondary schools.

School Improvement Planning and Reviews

We argued in the introduction to this report that large-scale, province-wide improvements in student achievement will most readily be attained if there is both pressure on the system (for example, in the form of a strong accountability framework) and support (for example, an investment in building the capacity of schools to improve).

First and foremost, we need a province-wide, mandated system of school and board self-evaluation and improvement planning processes. The system we envisage would combine school and board self-evaluations with reviews by an independent agency. The independent agency would review a sampling of schools, primarily in connection with its reviews of boards, and it would conduct its board reviews on a cyclical basis. We discuss school reviews in this chapter and board reviews in chapter 6.

School reviews

A few schools and boards already have comprehensive school review processes in place; all are required to create improvement plans for language and mathematics in response to their results on the EQAO tests. We envisage, however, more rigorous and comprehensive plans than those now in place.

Since, as we have stated, we cannot evaluate effective schools and improvements in the level of student achievement simply through province-wide tests that measure only a few aspects of student performance, how can we answer the question, "How good is our school?"

The answer can only come from an open, mandatory review in which a school evaluates itself against the characteristics of an effective school (such as those listed in chapter 2). The review should result in a published report that would be available to parents and other stakeholders. Ideally, schools will receive training and support to conduct their self-evaluation processes.

School self-evaluation must be a continuous process. A full-scale review should occur every three years, and it should result in a comprehensive improvement plan, developed with the participation of parents and school councils. Implementation of the plan should be monitored, and the plan should be adjusted or modified as necessary in each remaining year of the three-year cycle.

In *Schools Must Speak for Themselves: The Case for School Self-Evaluation*, John McBeath writes that "there is an emerging consensus and body of wisdom about what a healthy system of school evaluation looks like."[37] The primary goal of any such system, he argues (and we agree with him) is to help schools improve through critical self-evaluation—that is, improve from within.

British Columbia, Scotland, Rhode Island, and the state of Victoria in Australia offer interesting models of school self-evaluation accompanied by some form of independent review process.[38]

After studying many school review models, we conclude that the Ministry of Education should mandate a school self-evaluation process that:

- is common to every school in terms of the issues to be reviewed, the process to be used, and the people to be involved
- is driven by the importance of improving student achievement
- focuses on information about student performance
- includes a significant role for parents and, in senior elementary and secondary schools, for students
- results in a published review and improvement plan.

Using assessment and its results to inform instruction and professional development is an essential approach to school improvement.

– Joe Nathan and Nicola Johnson, *What Should We Do? A Practical Guide to Assessment and Accountability in Schools* (Minneapolis: Center for School Change, University of Minnesota, 2000), <www.hhh.umn.edu/centers/school-change/abhome.htm>.

First we need to define indicators of effectiveness, give schools time to establish a baseline for improvement, and then measure change over time.

– Consultation participant

Excellent school evaluation processes abound in both the private and public sectors. The ministry needs to select an approach and get on with the job of ensuring that all schools engage in effective self-evaluation and improvement planning.

Independent school reviews

We believe that, in addition to their self-evaluations, schools should be reviewed by an independent agency.

We do not want to downplay the importance of self-evaluation. Improvement and change are most likely to be sustained if the impetus comes from within the school community itself. Schools that conduct comprehensive self-evaluations that lead to sound improvement plans will not have to rely on independent reviews. They may well, however, welcome the outside perspective an independent review would bring.

Independent reviews should support the philosophy and structure of the schools' self-evaluations. They should be conducted on a sample number of schools in each board, primarily to assure the public that schools are conducting self-evaluations and developing school improvement plans in accordance with the ministry's requirements. As we said earlier, these sample reviews should be conducted as part of the independent agency's review of a board.

School reviews should also be conducted for two other purposes: to review schools that are believed to be underperforming and to review schools that are applying for "demonstration school" status (a concept we discuss later in this chapter).

The independent review agency should have the authority to make recommendations to school boards and the Minister of Education. For example, if a review reveals concerns that students in a particular school are not receiving the education to which they are entitled, the independent agency should recommend to the board and the Minister that swift and decisive action be taken.

The practice of independent school reviews varies in other jurisdictions. In England, all schools are reviewed by an independent review team every six years. Reviews are published, and schools that need special support to improve can be identified.[39]

While this system has much to recommend it, it is expensive. A reasonable estimate of the annual budget for such a school review agency in Ontario would be $30 million to $50 million, depending on whether the agency also conducted board reviews.

It is vital that school self-evaluation is complemented by external support and monitoring from education authorities and by independent and rigorous evaluation at a national level.... Without external inspection, self-evaluation can become self-deception.

– D. Osler, "Foreward by Her Majesty's Senior Chief Inspector of Schools" to Great Britain, Scottish Office, Inspectors of Schools, Audit Unit, *Standards and Quality in Scottish Schools*, 1995 to 1998 (Edinburgh: HM Stationery Office, 1999). Also available at: <www.scotland.gov.uk>.

At the other end of the scale are systems such as the school accreditation process in British Columbia. This province has mandated a common school review and improvement planning process. A school is accredited when a school superintendent, board, and independent reviewer agree that the school review and improvement planning processes have been conducted to their satisfaction. The province supports schools with funding during their review years.

We feel that Ontario's independent review agency should have a stronger role than the one implied by the British Columbia process.

Recommendation 21: That the Ministry of Education:

a. identify and mandate a common self-evaluation process for schools, one that is open and public; that involves a significant role for parents and, where appropriate, students; and that leads to a published improvement plan from every publicly funded school in the province; and

b. provide, through its leadership and through its funding formula, the resources needed to successfully implement this initiative.

Recommendation 22: That an agency be created to independently review schools for the following three purposes:

a. to review a sample number of schools in the province to assure the public that self-evaluations are being conducted and school improvement plans developed in a thorough and appropriate manner, following the provincially mandated format and process;

b. to conduct independent reviews of schools that are believed to be underperforming and to recommend the steps necessary to bring about immediate improvement in these schools; and

c. to provide an independent assessment of schools that are applying for "demonstration school" status (when such status is established).

Effective Schools

The Fraser Institute's April 2001 publication ranking secondary schools in Ontario and the subsequent outcry generated by that report underscore the need for a sophisticated approach to determining the effectiveness of our schools. To rank schools, as this study did, simply by their achievements in a few subjects at a particular level ignores the reality that schools have different missions, challenges, and advantages.[40]

It is vital that school self-evaluation is complemented by external support and monitoring from education authorities and by independent and rigorous evaluation at a national level.... Without external inspection, self-evaluation can become self-deception.

– D. Osler, "Foreward by Her Majesty's Senior Chief Inspector of Schools" to Great Britain, Scottish Office, Inspectors of Schools, Audit Unit, *Standards and Quality in Scottish Schools*, 1995 to 1998 (Edinburgh: HM Stationery Office, 1999). Also available at: <www.scotland.gov.uk>.

At the other end of the scale are systems such as the school accreditation process in British Columbia. This province has mandated a common school review and improvement planning process. A school is accredited when a school superintendent, board, and independent reviewer agree that the school review and improvement planning processes have been conducted to their satisfaction. The province supports schools with funding during their review years.

We feel that Ontario's independent review agency should have a stronger role than the one implied by the British Columbia process.

Recommendation 21: That the Ministry of Education:

a. identify and mandate a common self-evaluation process for schools, one that is open and public; that involves a significant role for parents and, where appropriate, students; and that leads to a published improvement plan from every publicly funded school in the province; and

b. provide, through its leadership and through its funding formula, the resources needed to successfully implement this initiative.

Recommendation 22: That an agency be created to independently review schools for the following three purposes:

a. to review a sample number of schools in the province to assure the public that self-evaluations are being conducted and school improvement plans developed in a thorough and appropriate manner, following the provincially mandated format and process;

b. to conduct independent reviews of schools that are believed to be underperforming and to recommend the steps necessary to bring about immediate improvement in these schools; and

c. to provide an independent assessment of schools that are applying for "demonstration school" status (when such status is established).

Effective Schools

The Fraser Institute's April 2001 publication ranking secondary schools in Ontario and the subsequent outcry generated by that report underscore the need for a sophisticated approach to determining the effectiveness of our schools. To rank schools, as this study did, simply by their achievements in a few subjects at a particular level ignores the reality that schools have different missions, challenges, and advantages.[40]

Is an effective school one in which students who share many advantages score well on university entrance tests? Or is it a school that takes in students who face many challenges and prepares as many of them as possible for productive lives in the world?

Of course, both schools may be effective. How then should we define effectiveness and its opposite, underachievement? We favour the approach adopted by many jurisdictions of creating profiles of schools. Each school can then be grouped with others with similar profiles, based on the similarity of the advantages or challenges they share. If Ontario adopted such an approach, we would be able to look at and assess the performance of schools and students, as described by a set of key performance indicators, in an appropriate context.

Profiles are commonly created using data that describe such socio-economic factors as wealth and poverty, education levels of parents and caregivers, mobility indicators, special-education participation rates, and languages spoken at home.

Several jurisdictions have considerable experience in creating such profiles. Quebec, California, and the United Kingdom have all done so.[41] Ontario will also be able to develop profiles of its schools when the EQAO's Education Quality Indicators Program (EQUIP) is fully developed, sometime in the next year. EQUIP will describe and measure a range of indicators, combining information on student achievement with information on the environment in which the student is learning.[42]

The information yielded by these profiles will be extremely valuable to Ontario schools in their review and improvement planning processes. With it, boards and the Ministry of Education will be able to identify schools that are dramatically underperforming relative to similar schools, and support them by providing assistance in the development of targeted improvement plans. If an underperforming school is unable to improve over a short period of time, it should be comprehensively reviewed by the independent agency mentioned in recommendation 22. The review would diagnose the problems and recommend the measures that should be taken by the Ministry of Education, working in conjunction with the local board.

Profiles should also enable boards and the ministry to identify effective schools relative to other schools with similar advantages and challenges. Those schools should be studied to identify ideas and processes that work, and encouraged to share their practices with other schools to promote improvement elsewhere.

When we have reliable, relevant, consistent, and comparable information such as that described in this chapter, we will be in a position to recognize schools that have demonstrated improvement in the level of their students' achievement,

as well as those that have high levels of student achievement (compared to schools with similar advantages and challenges, as discussed above).

How should we recognize the achievements of these schools? We believe that high-performing schools and much-improved schools should be invited by the Ministry of Education to apply for "demonstration school" status and encouraged by the ministry to do so.

Applicant schools would be reviewed by the independent agency referred to in recommendation 22. If recommended to the Minister of Education by the agency, "demonstration schools" would receive additional funding from the province, which they could use in ways that their school communities believe will enhance the education of their students. As a condition of receiving "demonstration school" status, these schools would be obliged to share their best practices with other schools, and to use a significant portion of the funding awarded them by the ministry to support this activity. Since "it's all about improvement," the obligation to share best practices must be central to the concept of establishing "demonstration school" status.

As we have pointed out, many jurisdictions have been gathering information about student performance and using it to assess the effectiveness and improve the performance of schools for many years. It will take time for Ontario to develop, collect, and analyse this information, but doing so is vital to school effectiveness and the improvement of student achievement. We must start now, or risk falling further behind in our efforts to improve our schools.

Recommendation 23: That the Ministry of Education ensure that Ontario has the capacity to do the following:

a. create profiles of schools

b. group schools according to the similarity of their advantages and challenges, and

c. identify high- and low-performing schools in each group.

Recommendation 24: That:

a. the Ministry of Education develop a program to identify and recognize "demonstration schools"—that is, high-performing schools and much-improved schools—based on the concept that schools be identified as exemplary in relation to schools with similar advantages and challenges;

b. all schools identified as either high-performing or much-improved be invited to apply for "demonstration school" status;

c. before schools are identified as "demonstration schools," they be subject to an independent review; and

d. schools that are recognized as "demonstration schools" be given a financial award by the ministry, a significant portion of which must be used to share their best practices with other schools.

In our previous roles as co-chairs of the Education Improvement Commission, we expressed our support for the funding of elementary and secondary education through district school boards and school authorities.

Since then, the government has announced its intention to provide a tax credit for Ontarians who pay private school tuition fees. It is, therefore, our view that a regulation should be put in place to ensure that schools that issue receipts for tax credit purposes are subject to a set of requirements aimed at ensuring their accountability.

as well as those that have high levels of student achievement (compared to schools with similar advantages and challenges, as discussed above).

How should we recognize the achievements of these schools? We believe that high-performing schools and much-improved schools should be invited by the Ministry of Education to apply for "demonstration school" status and encouraged by the ministry to do so.

Applicant schools would be reviewed by the independent agency referred to in recommendation 22. If recommended to the Minister of Education by the agency, "demonstration schools" would receive additional funding from the province, which they could use in ways that their school communities believe will enhance the education of their students. As a condition of receiving "demonstration school" status, these schools would be obliged to share their best practices with other schools, and to use a significant portion of the funding awarded them by the ministry to support this activity. Since "it's all about improvement," the obligation to share best practices must be central to the concept of establishing "demonstration school" status.

As we have pointed out, many jurisdictions have been gathering information about student performance and using it to assess the effectiveness and improve the performance of schools for many years. It will take time for Ontario to develop, collect, and analyse this information, but doing so is vital to school effectiveness and the improvement of student achievement. We must start now, or risk falling further behind in our efforts to improve our schools.

Recommendation 23: That the Ministry of Education ensure that Ontario has the capacity to do the following:

a. create profiles of schools

b. group schools according to the similarity of their advantages and challenges, and

c. identify high- and low-performing schools in each group.

Recommendation 24: That:

a. the Ministry of Education develop a program to identify and recognize "demonstration schools"—that is, high-performing schools and much-improved schools—based on the concept that schools be identified as exemplary in relation to schools with similar advantages and challenges;

b. all schools identified as either high-performing or much-improved be invited to apply for "demonstration school" status;

c. before schools are identified as "demonstration schools," they be subject to an independent review; and

d. schools that are recognized as "demonstration schools" be given a financial award by the ministry, a significant portion of which must be used to share their best practices with other schools.

In our previous roles as co-chairs of the Education Improvement Commission, we expressed our support for the funding of elementary and secondary education through district school boards and school authorities.

Since then, the government has announced its intention to provide a tax credit for Ontarians who pay private school tuition fees. It is, therefore, our view that a regulation should be put in place to ensure that schools that issue receipts for tax credit purposes are subject to a set of requirements aimed at ensuring their accountability.

5. Organizing Schools to Support Continuous Improvement

The topic of school organization has been the most challenging part of our task. The sheer size of this topic, which encompasses issues such as semestering, the amount of time allocated to each subject in the curriculum, the structure of the school day, alternative school-year models, and the use of instructional time, made it difficult for us to choose the most important areas for discussion. Volumes have been written on every aspect of school organization.

School organization is also a challenging topic in the sense that, to a surprising extent, the practices and structures of school organization have changed little in the last half-century.

> We'll need flexibility if schools are going to focus on meeting the needs of their students.
>
> – Consultation participants

Very little useful information is available on the relationship of student performance to school organization in Ontario. To determine this relationship, we need the kind of consistent and reliable student performance data, on a school-by-school basis, that we described in chapter 4. Only then will the Ministry of Education, district school boards, and schools be able to make informed decisions about school organization.

> Those closest to the situation are often more able to make appropriate decisions about student learning.
>
> – Kenora Catholic District School Board, Written submission to the Task Force on Effective Schools (Kenora: the Board, 2001).

Decisions about organizational issues should be made at the local level by boards, schools, and communities. The needs and best interests of one school and community will not necessarily be the needs and best interests of another. In some cases, traditional patterns of school organization appear to work well because the schools are effective and student performance is improving. In other cases, the same kind of organization appears to impede effectiveness and improvement.

In this chapter, we have chosen to discuss the aspects of school organization that were raised in our consultations: classroom organization and school organization.

Classroom Organization

Effective classrooms have the same characteristics as effective schools. We described what we believe to be the characteristics of effective schools in chapter 2. During our consultations, people endorsed these characteristics.

One of these characteristics is top-quality teaching—the most essential component of effective classrooms and the most important contributor to high levels of student performance. Ontario's schools have excellent teachers. In chapter 3, we recommended several ways to ensure that teaching excellence continues and is improved upon.

We focus now on three teaching issues that pertain directly to decisions schools make about the way they organize their classrooms: learning time, planning time, and class size.

Learning time

Many people with whom we spoke believe that class size is the most important factor in making schools more effective. Research does show that smaller classes in the primary and junior divisions have an important effect on student achievement. The literature also makes it clear, however, that class size reductions in and of themselves do not necessarily lead to improved levels of student achievement.[43]

To make effective use of smaller classes, teachers and students must devote more time to teaching and learning. What teachers do with instructional time—"time on task"—is crucial. Some studies contend that only half of scheduled instructional time is used for productive learning.[44]

Teachers and everyone else in the education system need to examine their practices to ensure that classroom time is uninterrupted; that is, as free from distractions as possible. It may seem obvious that more instructional time results in more learning and improved student achievement, but it is also easy to let interruptions chip away at learning time. For example, announcements made over school public address systems often disrupt classes. Many other interruptions are so common that we do not recognize them as such, or they are so short that we don't think they could affect learning. Research shows that even short interruptions matter, and reduce student learning time.

At the same time, numerous studies have demonstrated that where just a few extra minutes are consistently devoted to active learning time, student achievement is better than in otherwise comparable classrooms.[45] Some research suggests that the most significant single factor in raising student achievement is creating more learning time.[46]

To make classrooms and schools more effective, therefore, everyone must make an effort to ensure that as much time as possible is spent productively in teaching and learning activities. Teachers can make a difference by constantly assessing their ability to use their teaching time effectively, by striving to improve, and by sharing best practices with colleagues in the school and through professional development activities. The Ministry of Education and district school boards should ensure that attention is paid to "time on task" in school improvement planning.

Ensuring that classroom learning time is used productively is a straightforward and easy-to-implement strategy that could help make our schools more effective.

Decisions made about scheduling are influenced by a number of factors, many of which are not in the best interests of students.

– Consultation participant

Recommendation 25: That:

a. the importance of classroom learning time or "time on task" be reflected in school and board improvement plans; and

b. the Ministry of Education, district school boards, and schools examine their practices with a view to minimizing interruptions to classroom learning time and maximizing the time students are involved in learning.

Planning time

Planning time is critical for teacher effectiveness.[47] Teachers need to have time within the school week to work together, by grade, subject, or division, to collaboratively examine student work, review teaching strategies, plan, and share best practices. New teachers in particular would benefit from the support, counsel, and guidance of experienced staff in these planning sessions. All of this collaborative work, of course, should be focused on improving the level of student achievement in the school.

We need to schedule more time in the day for teachers to collaborate.

– Consultation participant

Recommendation 26: That principals ensure that their teaching staff hold regularly scheduled planning meetings by grade, subject, or division to focus on making instructional time more effective and improving the level of student achievement in the school.

Class size

A great deal of research has examined the relationship between class size and student achievement. As we noted under "Learning time," research shows that smaller classes in the primary and junior divisions lead to improved student performance. Evidence is most conclusive with respect to the primary division

(Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3). Research shows that as class sizes in this division approach 15 to 17 students, the level of student achievement increases.[48]

Reducing class sizes in other grades is also a laudable goal. While conclusive evidence is not yet available, recent research is beginning to find connections between class size reductions and improved student performance in other grades. But, aside from the research, we know that smaller classes allow teachers to spend more time with individual students.

The Ministry of Education has taken steps to reduce class sizes. If resources to *further* reduce class sizes are limited, devoting the resources that are available to the primary division holds the greatest potential for improving student achievement.

Recommendation 27: That the Ministry of Education make a commitment to further reduce class size in the primary division.

School Organization

The mandate of the Task Force on Effective Schools related to school organization is particularly broad. We were asked:

> How best to organize schools—in areas such as school structures, assignment of staff, use of available resources, and timetabling—to support continual learning, and the impact of these organizational elements on student learning.[49]

Research on the subject of school organization is vast. During our consultations, we learned about specific pressures that affect the ability of Ontario schools and boards to address organizational issues in order to improve student performance. We are confining our discussion to the four topics that were raised most often during our consultations: the school year, the school day, the "virtual" classroom, and remedial assistance for students.

School year

Many people believe that all schools and school boards in Ontario follow the traditional school year calendar; that is, starting in September and ending in June. This perception is incorrect. Ontario schools, and schools in other jurisdictions, use a variety of school-year organization models.

One model used by several schools is the inappropriately named "year-round" system. Typically, schools that use this model break the school year into a small number of instructional periods that are followed by short breaks, while maintaining the same number of instructional days as in traditional models.

To make classrooms and schools more effective, therefore, everyone must make an effort to ensure that as much time as possible is spent productively in teaching and learning activities. Teachers can make a difference by constantly assessing their ability to use their teaching time effectively, by striving to improve, and by sharing best practices with colleagues in the school and through professional development activities. The Ministry of Education and district school boards should ensure that attention is paid to "time on task" in school improvement planning.

Ensuring that classroom learning time is used productively is a straightforward and easy-to-implement strategy that could help make our schools more effective.

Decisions made about scheduling are influenced by a number of factors, many of which are not in the best interests of students.

– Consultation participant

Recommendation 25: That:

a. the importance of classroom learning time or "time on task" be reflected in school and board improvement plans; and

b. the Ministry of Education, district school boards, and schools examine their practices with a view to minimizing interruptions to classroom learning time and maximizing the time students are involved in learning.

Planning time

Planning time is critical for teacher effectiveness.[47] Teachers need to have time within the school week to work together, by grade, subject, or division, to collaboratively examine student work, review teaching strategies, plan, and share best practices. New teachers in particular would benefit from the support, counsel, and guidance of experienced staff in these planning sessions. All of this collaborative work, of course, should be focused on improving the level of student achievement in the school.

We need to schedule more time in the day for teachers to collaborate.

– Consultation participant

Recommendation 26: That principals ensure that their teaching staff hold regularly scheduled planning meetings by grade, subject, or division to focus on making instructional time more effective and improving the level of student achievement in the school.

Class size

A great deal of research has examined the relationship between class size and student achievement. As we noted under "Learning time," research shows that smaller classes in the primary and junior divisions lead to improved student performance. Evidence is most conclusive with respect to the primary division

(Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3). Research shows that as class sizes in this division approach 15 to 17 students, the level of student achievement increases.[48]

Reducing class sizes in other grades is also a laudable goal. While conclusive evidence is not yet available, recent research is beginning to find connections between class size reductions and improved student performance in other grades. But, aside from the research, we know that smaller classes allow teachers to spend more time with individual students.

The Ministry of Education has taken steps to reduce class sizes. If resources to *further* reduce class sizes are limited, devoting the resources that are available to the primary division holds the greatest potential for improving student achievement.

Recommendation 27: That the Ministry of Education make a commitment to further reduce class size in the primary division.

School Organization

The mandate of the Task Force on Effective Schools related to school organization is particularly broad. We were asked:

> How best to organize schools—in areas such as school structures, assignment of staff, use of available resources, and timetabling—to support continual learning, and the impact of these organizational elements on student learning.[49]

Research on the subject of school organization is vast. During our consultations, we learned about specific pressures that affect the ability of Ontario schools and boards to address organizational issues in order to improve student performance. We are confining our discussion to the four topics that were raised most often during our consultations: the school year, the school day, the "virtual" classroom, and remedial assistance for students.

School year

Many people believe that all schools and school boards in Ontario follow the traditional school year calendar; that is, starting in September and ending in June. This perception is incorrect. Ontario schools, and schools in other jurisdictions, use a variety of school-year organization models.

One model used by several schools is the inappropriately named "year-round" system. Typically, schools that use this model break the school year into a small number of instructional periods that are followed by short breaks, while maintaining the same number of instructional days as in traditional models.

Across North America, some 50 "year-round" models are in use.[50] The one most frequently used has students attending school for four eight-week blocks of instructional time, with each block followed by a three-week break.

The rationale for the "year-round" model is twofold:

- Students learn more effectively, proponents believe, and remember more of what they learn if their holidays are shorter. (Proponents also suggest that in the traditional 10-month school year, schools waste up to six weeks in the fall term re-teaching lessons taught the previous spring. This point is disputed by opponents of "year-round" models.)
- In "year-round" models, different groups of students can proceed through a school on different time tracks, thereby increasing the capacity of schools. (This point is particularly appealing to boards in which enrolment is growing.)

But do "year-round" models enhance student performance? While there are claims on many sides, the findings to date are inconclusive. According to many researchers, we will not be able to fully determine whether "year-round" models improve student performance until improvement is the primary reason schools move to these models.[51]

Some interesting research suggests that "year-round" models improve achievement levels for students who live in less affluent circumstances[52] and those whose first language is not the language of instruction.[53]

To date, the perceived effect of "year-round" schooling on traditional summer activities in Ontario has been an impediment to the "year-round" model being adopted by more Ontario schools. Boards, with a few exceptions, have been quick to dismiss the model because of negative reactions from parents and from sectors of the economy (such as the tourism, family vacation, and camping sectors) that count on, and may be built around, children having their summers free.

We do not believe that "year-round" models should be ignored, but we need more information before we can suggest that they be considered by more Ontario schools. Several Ontario schools do operate successfully using "year-round" models, and we can learn from them. In addition, the federal government, through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, is funding research into the issue of "year-round" schooling.[54] We can also learn from this work.

Recommendation 28: That the Ministry of Education:

a. in conjunction with an Ontario faculty of education and schools in Ontario that operate on a "year-round" organizational model, monitor the research that is now being funded by the federal government as it relates to the

effect of "year-round" organizational models on student achievement; and

b. ensure that this research is shared with district school boards.

We commented in chapter 4 about the almost total shift in our secondary schools over the last 15 years to the semester system. Under this model, secondary students take half of their courses in the first half of the year and the rest in the second half. The Ontario secondary school system has made this shift without monitoring the effect on student performance of semestered versus non-semestered timetables. This remarkable fact alone provides a compelling reason for the province to develop key performance indicators at the secondary level, gather information about those indicators, and publish it, as we recommended in chapter 4.

During our consultations, we heard that many parents, and some principals and teachers, favour moving away from the semester model. The response of boards, however, is that returning to the traditional model would result in more students being enrolled in a given course at one time, and would therefore require more textbooks and learning materials. Boards maintain that they are unable to finance the purchase of this additional material.

Recommendation 29: That the Ministry of Education:

a. consider providing a one-time funding supplement for secondary schools that intend to change from a semestered to a non-semestered timetable; and

b. make it a condition of such one-time funding that the school monitor, and report to its community on, the effect of the change on student achievement levels.

School day

According to our research, other jurisdictions commonly approach the task of improving student achievement at the elementary level by increasing the amount of time in the school day dedicated to literacy and numeracy. This adjustment is usually in response to dissatisfaction with existing levels of achievement in these important areas. It is also usually part of a larger improvement strategy, involving challenging improvement targets set at a board/county, state/provincial, or national level.

Across North America, some 50 "year-round" models are in use.[50] The one most frequently used has students attending school for four eight-week blocks of instructional time, with each block followed by a three-week break.

The rationale for the "year-round" model is twofold:

- Students learn more effectively, proponents believe, and remember more of what they learn if their holidays are shorter. (Proponents also suggest that in the traditional 10-month school year, schools waste up to six weeks in the fall term re-teaching lessons taught the previous spring. This point is disputed by opponents of "year-round" models.)
- In "year-round" models, different groups of students can proceed through a school on different time tracks, thereby increasing the capacity of schools. (This point is particularly appealing to boards in which enrolment is growing.)

But do "year-round" models enhance student performance? While there are claims on many sides, the findings to date are inconclusive. According to many researchers, we will not be able to fully determine whether "year-round" models improve student performance until improvement is the primary reason schools move to these models.[51]

Some interesting research suggests that "year-round" models improve achievement levels for students who live in less affluent circumstances[52] and those whose first language is not the language of instruction.[53]

To date, the perceived effect of "year-round" schooling on traditional summer activities in Ontario has been an impediment to the "year-round" model being adopted by more Ontario schools. Boards, with a few exceptions, have been quick to dismiss the model because of negative reactions from parents and from sectors of the economy (such as the tourism, family vacation, and camping sectors) that count on, and may be built around, children having their summers free.

We do not believe that "year-round" models should be ignored, but we need more information before we can suggest that they be considered by more Ontario schools. Several Ontario schools do operate successfully using "year-round" models, and we can learn from them. In addition, the federal government, through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, is funding research into the issue of "year-round" schooling.[54] We can also learn from this work.

Recommendation 28: That the Ministry of Education:

a. in conjunction with an Ontario faculty of education and schools in Ontario that operate on a "year-round" organizational model, monitor the research that is now being funded by the federal government as it relates to the

effect of "year-round" organizational models on student achievement; and

b. ensure that this research is shared with district school boards.

We commented in chapter 4 about the almost total shift in our secondary schools over the last 15 years to the semester system. Under this model, secondary students take half of their courses in the first half of the year and the rest in the second half. The Ontario secondary school system has made this shift without monitoring the effect on student performance of semestered versus non-semestered timetables. This remarkable fact alone provides a compelling reason for the province to develop key performance indicators at the secondary level, gather information about those indicators, and publish it, as we recommended in chapter 4.

During our consultations, we heard that many parents, and some principals and teachers, favour moving away from the semester model. The response of boards, however, is that returning to the traditional model would result in more students being enrolled in a given course at one time, and would therefore require more textbooks and learning materials. Boards maintain that they are unable to finance the purchase of this additional material.

Recommendation 29: That the Ministry of Education:

a. consider providing a one-time funding supplement for secondary schools that intend to change from a semestered to a non-semestered timetable; and

b. make it a condition of such one-time funding that the school monitor, and report to its community on, the effect of the change on student achievement levels.

School day

According to our research, other jurisdictions commonly approach the task of improving student achievement at the elementary level by increasing the amount of time in the school day dedicated to literacy and numeracy. This adjustment is usually in response to dissatisfaction with existing levels of achievement in these important areas. It is also usually part of a larger improvement strategy, involving challenging improvement targets set at a board/county, state/provincial, or national level.

A good example is the British National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, which we discussed briefly in chapter 4. The British government set challenging national improvement targets for literacy and numeracy, invested heavily in the resources and training required for dramatic improvement in these areas, *and* increased the instructional time devoted to them. For example, every elementary class was required to devote one hour of every school day to literacy.

We in Ontario also need to dramatically improve the literacy and numeracy levels of our elementary students. We need to examine the changes made by other jurisdictions to the amount of time allocated to these two parts of the curriculum and study the implications for our schools and our students. We may find that concerns about performance levels in other subjects and at other grade levels cause us to reconsider time allocations for the delivery of other parts of the curriculum as well, from Kindergarten through Grade 12.

"Virtual" classrooms

The size of a secondary school's student population often determines the course selection available to students. There may not be enough students in a school who are interested in a particular subject to justify the cost of hiring a teacher who has the appropriate qualifications to teach it. An increasing number of school boards now use distance education to offer students greater course selection.

In distance education, students work in a "virtual" classroom. They follow courses via video-conferencing or Internet connections. In some cases, there is an interactive component, whereby students can receive instant direction and feedback from a teacher who may well be in another city. They can pursue these courses from school or, if their homes have the appropriate technology, from home.

Information technology is also being used to facilitate communication and collaboration among schools, parents, and community organizations. From their homes, parents and students can check school websites for project and homework assignments, log on to individual teacher websites to make requests, and obtain information from school and board websites about events and initiatives. As a result, schools are able to share information in a timely and efficient manner, offer parents more information about school programs and activities, and support continuous improvement in student performance.

Information technology offers new options for school organization that need to be explored and nurtured. Provincial and federal governments in Canada are developing the technological capacity to enhance their services to the public in all areas, including education. A great deal of information and a great many models exist. The potential of information technology to help schools—in particular, small secondary schools—deliver programs is significant. Boards should explore this area more fully.

We add one note of caution: Students who are engaged in online learning for credit, especially if they are working in an isolated environment, should be monitored by a local teacher-coach.

We have noted that information and models are plentiful. What is missing, to take full advantage of the potential that information technology offers our students, is a clear vision and strategy for the use of information technology in Ontario's education system. The Ministry of Education has set up the Ontario Knowledge Network for Learning to develop this vision and strategy.

Recommendation 30: That the Ministry of Education continue to support the Ontario Knowledge Network for Learning's work with public and private partners aimed at developing a vision and a plan of action for using information and communications technology to enhance learning opportunities in Ontario's schools.

Remedial help

As part of the educational reforms of the last five years, schools and their students are required to participate in the province-wide tests conducted by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO). The test results are published, and schools and boards are required to develop improvement plans to address the test results and submit these plans to the EQAO. To ensure continuous improvement in student achievement, principals and their staffs need more flexibility to structure timetables, direct resources, and assign staff to respond quickly to test results.

This will be particularly true of the Grade 10 literacy test. As of next year (2001–02), students will have to pass this test to receive their secondary school graduation diploma. Schools will need to help their students prepare for and pass this test, they will need to schedule specific remedial classes in their timetables, and they will need to do so quickly.

Effective schools have always provided remedial assistance to those students who need it. The EQAO tests merely confirm what good teachers already know about their students. But the new requirements associated with province-wide testing place new demands on teachers, schools, and boards.

The Grade 10 literacy test constitutes the most pressing remedial issue. But remedial help will develop new significance in every grade if, as was announced in the most recent Speech from the Throne, students will not be allowed to progress from one grade to the next unless they have met the expectations for the grade set out in the Ministry of Education's curriculum documents. The implications of this announcement for the funding, resourcing, and timetabling of remedial activities is significant.

We add one note of caution: Students who are engaged in online learning for credit, especially if they are working in an isolated environment, should be monitored by a local teacher-coach.

We have noted that information and models are plentiful. What is missing, to take full advantage of the potential that information technology offers our students, is a clear vision and strategy for the use of information technology in Ontario's education system. The Ministry of Education has set up the Ontario Knowledge Network for Learning to develop this vision and strategy.

Recommendation 30: That the Ministry of Education continue to support the Ontario Knowledge Network for Learning's work with public and private partners aimed at developing a vision and a plan of action for using information and communications technology to enhance learning opportunities in Ontario's schools.

Remedial help

As part of the educational reforms of the last five years, schools and their students are required to participate in the province-wide tests conducted by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO). The test results are published, and schools and boards are required to develop improvement plans to address the test results and submit these plans to the EQAO. To ensure continuous improvement in student achievement, principals and their staffs need more flexibility to structure timetables, direct resources, and assign staff to respond quickly to test results.

This will be particularly true of the Grade 10 literacy test. As of next year (2001–02), students will have to pass this test to receive their secondary school graduation diploma. Schools will need to help their students prepare for and pass this test, they will need to schedule specific remedial classes in their timetables, and they will need to do so quickly.

Effective schools have always provided remedial assistance to those students who need it. The EQAO tests merely confirm what good teachers already know about their students. But the new requirements associated with province-wide testing place new demands on teachers, schools, and boards.

The Grade 10 literacy test constitutes the most pressing remedial issue. But remedial help will develop new significance in every grade if, as was announced in the most recent Speech from the Throne, students will not be allowed to progress from one grade to the next unless they have met the expectations for the grade set out in the Ministry of Education's curriculum documents. The implications of this announcement for the funding, resourcing, and timetabling of remedial activities is significant.

Recommendation 31: That the Ministry of Education, in conjunction with district school boards, examine the issue of remedial help and take measures to ensure that schools have the flexibility and resources they need to help their students progress through school to graduation at an appropriate pace.

During our consultations, we learned that decisions about the way a school is organized are often influenced by transportation considerations. In recent years, district school boards in Ontario have made great efforts to improve the efficiency of their student transportation services. We support these efforts, and we believe that many boards would benefit from greater cooperation with their coterminous boards in this area. While there was certainly a need for efficiencies, we were advised that in some cases the efficiencies, coupled with limited resources for student transportation, are impeding boards' and schools' ability to make changes to school organization.

For example, bus schedules may not allow students who depend on school buses to take advantage of instruction, remedial help, and extracurricular activities that are offered before and after school. Many of these schedules are complex, having been painstakingly worked out in cooperation with coterminous boards and transportation suppliers to fit within boards' transportation funding allocations.

Nonetheless, schools must be able to program instructional time, remedial help, and extracurricular activities to meet the needs of all their students. The participants in our consultation sessions felt that too often school timetables and activities are influenced more by transportation funding, schedules, and contracts than by the needs of students.

We recognize that this is a complex issue, but believe that the Ministry of Education should work with district school boards to ensure that students have equitable access to before- and after-school instruction, remedial help, and extracurricular activities.

Recommendation 32: That the Ministry of Education, in its current review of transportation funding, work with school boards to ensure that the education funding model's provisions for student transportation allow boards to make transportation arrangements that support the goals of effective schools and continuous improvement in student achievement.

Recommendation 31: That the Ministry of Education, in conjunction with district school boards, examine the issue of remedial help and take measures to ensure that schools have the flexibility and resources they need to help their students progress through school to graduation at an appropriate pace.

During our consultations, we learned that decisions about the way a school is organized are often influenced by transportation considerations. In recent years, district school boards in Ontario have made great efforts to improve the efficiency of their student transportation services. We support these efforts, and we believe that many boards would benefit from greater cooperation with their coterminous boards in this area. While there was certainly a need for efficiencies, we were advised that in some cases the efficiencies, coupled with limited resources for student transportation, are impeding boards' and schools' ability to make changes to school organization.

For example, bus schedules may not allow students who depend on school buses to take advantage of instruction, remedial help, and extracurricular activities that are offered before and after school. Many of these schedules are complex, having been painstakingly worked out in cooperation with coterminous boards and transportation suppliers to fit within boards' transportation funding allocations.

Nonetheless, schools must be able to program instructional time, remedial help, and extracurricular activities to meet the needs of all their students. The participants in our consultation sessions felt that too often school timetables and activities are influenced more by transportation funding, schedules, and contracts than by the needs of students.

We recognize that this is a complex issue, but believe that the Ministry of Education should work with district school boards to ensure that students have equitable access to before- and after-school instruction, remedial help, and extracurricular activities.

Recommendation 32: That the Ministry of Education, in its current review of transportation funding, work with school boards to ensure that the education funding model's provisions for student transportation allow boards to make transportation arrangements that support the goals of effective schools and continuous improvement in student achievement.

6. Monitoring Board Performance

We said earlier in this report that effective change requires a balance of pressure and support. Change involves more than the establishment of rules and regulations (pressure); it also requires investment in the capacity to change, grow, and improve (support).

One of the most significant "pressures" jurisdictions outside Ontario and Canada have implemented to improve the level of student achievement and school performance is school and board reviews. In jurisdictions such as England, Scotland, and Wales in Great Britain and California, Texas, and Massachusetts in the United States, these reviews have become the norm. (See appendix C for more information.)

In chapter 4, we discussed school reviews and made recommendations that they be introduced in Ontario—both school self-evaluations and independent school reviews. In this chapter, we discuss board reviews. As we will show, board reviews conducted by an independent agency are an investment in quality assurance. They will support parents, boards, and the Ministry of Education in their efforts to improve the quality of education in Ontario. They will do this by providing these groups with the information and direction they need to ensure that Ontario's education systems plan for continuous improvement.

Board reviews are not yet part of educational accountability frameworks in Canada. In the 1970s and 1980s, Ontario developed and implemented the Cooperative Evaluation and Development of School Systems, a voluntary program for evaluating and "developing" school boards. In 1999–2000, the former Education Improvement Commission (EIC) undertook the first and only systematic independent review of school boards in Canada. According to the EIC's mandate, its review focused

primarily on the way Ontario's then-new district school boards were responding to the restructuring of the province's education governance system. The evaluation of this review process by participants (boards, their teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, students, and other members of local communities) was overwhelmingly positive, but participants said that the review was too narrowly focused. They regretted that it did not examine issues related to student performance and the curriculum.

To date, no jurisdiction in Canada has instituted a mandatory, comprehensive system of board reviews focused on the improvement of school performance and student achievement.

The Minister of Education asked the Task Force on Effective Schools, as part of its mandate, to make recommendations on:

> Models the Ministry of Education should implement to review boards on an ongoing basis to ensure that they are using resources in the most effective ways to improve student learning and achievement.[55]

The mandate directed the task force to focus the board review process on the following:

- management practices of boards that impact on student learning
- planning systems
- school improvement plans
- teacher excellence.[56]

The Need for Board Reviews

During our consultations, we asked participants, "What is an effective school board?" The overwhelming response was:

> An effective school board is one that has the capacity to identify the needs of schools and then helps them to improve. It also encourages and facilitates sharing and cooperation among boards.

Let us provide some background. In Ontario and most other provinces, legislation defines school boards as the organizations responsible for delivering education programs and holds trustees responsible for the following:

- articulating their board's vision for education
- developing policies based on their board's vision and on provincial policies

- setting budgets and goals, monitoring the implementation of board policies, and monitoring student achievement
- providing program equity for all students throughout their boards.

We believe that the public has the right to know how schools and school boards are performing and how they plan to improve. Similarly, the public has a right to know how the provincial education system is performing on key indicators and whether the resources provided by the province are appropriate.

In Ontario, the Ministry of Education is responsible for:

- articulating a vision for education
- setting the province-wide direction
- setting curriculum policy, including what students in each grade should know
- providing sufficient and equitable funding to school boards.

In 1998, the Ministry of Education assumed complete responsibility for funding elementary and secondary education. (Previously, school boards had the authority to raise some of their income from their local property tax bases.) The ministry sets the spending parameters within which boards must operate. In our view, an essential component of a comprehensive accountability framework must be the collection of information on the adequacy of boards' resources and on how boards are directing their resources to support student achievement.

Regularly scheduled board reviews could provide this information, as well as other information that would allow the public to evaluate the performance of all levels of Ontario's publicly funded education system—schools, boards, and the province—and to hold them accountable for these performances.

The primary purposes of comprehensive board reviews would be as follows:

- to contribute to the continuous improvement of schools by evaluating how successfully boards support their schools' efforts to improve the level of student achievement
- to determine whether boards need assistance in helping their schools improve and the kind of assistance that is needed.

If a comprehensive accountability framework were in place for Ontario's elementary and secondary school systems, the information from board reviews would enable the ministry to report on how well boards are performing within that framework. In addition to providing direction and assistance to individual boards, the cumulative findings generated through board reviews would enable the ministry to identify province-wide issues that require attention and improvement and areas that should be subject to provincial policy reviews.

Earlier in this report, we referred to some of the policy options available for monitoring and improving the performance of the education system, including the following:

- province-wide student testing
- the development and publication of other performance indicators, including secondary school credit accumulations and graduation rates
- mandated board and school improvement planning processes
- evaluations of teacher performance.

Audits are another option, as are regular, comprehensive board reviews.

We believe that board reviews would make a significant contribution to achieving our goals: effective schools and continuous improvement in the education system.

Accountability and Improvement Strategies in Other Jurisdictions

Almost all the jurisdictions we studied, both in Canada and elsewhere in the world, have developed strategies for evaluating the performance of their education systems. These strategies are rooted in accountability frameworks that are based on key indicators—particularly student performance as measured by common (state- or nation-wide) tests. (A chart that summarizes the findings of our research on other jurisdictions is attached as appendix C.)

According to a research paper on "public school accountability" in the United States, many states have moved well past the collection of information as a strategy for driving school improvement. They are now in a second phase: using data and research to establish standards and define practice.[57] Ontario is well behind these jurisdictions. We have not yet defined a set of key indicators of student performance that we could use for the collection of information.

The kind of student performance information that we discussed in chapter 4, such as test results, graduation rates, and so on, can be used for a variety of purposes. Teachers can use test results as a diagnostic tool for assessing and assisting individual students. Regulators can use a variety of performance information to hold schools and boards accountable for their students' level of achievement, or to certify individual students' mastery of the curriculum. The ministry, boards, and schools could use this information to influence curriculum change, student motivation, and other aspects of the education system. Each of these uses shares the goal of improving student performance.

The increasing emphasis on monitoring the quality of education over recent years has arisen from three main sources: a heightened awareness among schools and education authorities that they are accountable to the public for the education provided; increased concern by local and central government that the system should provide good value for the very considerable amount of money expended; and the desire of individual education authorities, schools and teachers to improve the quality of the learning and teaching process. These three have combined to provide a powerful justification for evaluation in and of the education service.

– Scottish Education Department, HM Inspectors of Schools, *Effective Secondary Schools* (Edinburgh: HM Stationery Office, 1988), 1.

Student performance data could also be used to assess financial accountability. It could help answer these two important questions:

- Are the resources adequate to achieve the mandated standards?
- Are the resources being directed appropriately to support achievement of the mandated standards?

Accountability and Improvement Strategies in Ontario

Ontario already has some excellent strategies to increase accountability in the education system, such as those contained in the mandates of the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) and the Ontario College of Teachers. But, as the above-noted research on other jurisdictions indicates, we have far to go.

In chapter 2, we argued that the Ministry of Education has a key responsibility to supply both the pressure and the support on which continuous improvement depends, and we listed some examples (see pages 8 and 9). In our view, attention to all the items on that list would provide Ontario with the accountability and improvement strategies it needs.

Board reviews

In addition to the self-evaluation process for schools that we recommended in chapter 4, we believe that the Ministry of Education should identify and mandate a self-evaluation process for district school boards, one that leads to a published improvement plan from every publicly funded board in the province. These improvement plans would form the basis for a review of each board by an independent agency. As we stated in chapter 4, the independent agency would review a sample of the schools in a board's jurisdiction as part of its review of each board.

The independent board reviews would assess a board's success in promoting a high level of student achievement in its jurisdiction. Independent reviews would include an examination of the following:

- information about student performance and improvement
- curriculum delivery in schools
- staffing policies and practices, including staff development
- board policies
- the effectiveness and credibility of board and school self-evaluations and improvement plans

- the process used by the board to review its schools' performance
- the allocation of resources by the board to support student learning
- parental and community involvement
- facilities management
- issues of teacher qualifications and the assignment of teachers that may affect the improvement of student achievement.

The independent review process should be designed so that boards have to demonstrate to the review team that they are implementing their improvement plans and ensuring that their schools conduct self-evaluations and establish and implement improvement plans.

The findings and recommendations of the independent review would be published. Recommendations would be targeted at helping the boards align their resources and strategies to the goal of continuous school improvement.

Independent board reviews should be conducted by an independent agency established for this purpose. As we have said, this agency would also conduct independent school reviews. It should be an arm's-length agency of the Ministry of Education and its reports should be public. (One model is an agency that reports to the Legislature.) The agency should have the authority to establish a cycle of board reviews—we recommend a five-year cycle, with follow-up reviews, where necessary, after one or two years; to determine its own needs and processes; and to set up expert review teams that include members of the public.

There was strong support from those who participated in consultation sessions for having the reviews conducted by an independent agency.

Independent board reviews, held in conjunction with regularly scheduled board self-assessments, are an essential component of any comprehensive accountability framework. They would provide a credible third-party assessment of the performance of a key aspect of Ontario's education system. Such reviews are the norm in numerous jurisdictions outside Canada. If Ontario institutes these reviews, it will be taking a leadership role in education accountability in Canada.

The independent school board review process would benefit all partners in the education system.

It would benefit parents and students by:

- ensuring that improving the level of student achievement remains the central focus of schools, boards, and the Ministry of Education
- monitoring student achievement on a continuous basis and making recommendations to support continuous improvement

- providing parents and local communities with information on schools and boards in their area
- increasing public confidence in the achievements of Ontario's students and public support for the education system.

It would benefit boards by:

- increasing public confidence in district school boards
- increasing awareness in the community of a board's needs and successes
- promoting a coordinated approach to measuring and improving student achievement
- providing information upon which strategic decisions to direct improvement in a board's performance can be based.

It would benefit the Ministry of Education by:

- providing detailed analyses of each board's performance, as well as an aggregate picture of the performance of boards across the province
- enhancing the ministry's ability to assess school and board performance and to direct assistance where it is needed to improve student learning in the province
- promoting accountability and public confidence in the education system.

Recommendation 33: That:

a. the government create an agency to conduct independent reviews of district school boards on a regular basis;

b. this agency be an arm's-length agency of the Ministry of Education and report its findings publicly; and

c. this agency be the same agency as described in recommendation 22, with the authority to conduct the school reviews described in that recommendation.

Recommendation 34: That the board review process assess a board's success in promoting a high level of student achievement in its jurisdiction and that it include an examination of the following:

- information about student performance and improvement
- curriculum delivery in schools
- staffing policies and practices, including staff development

- board policies
- board and school improvement plans
- the process used by the board to review its schools' performance
- the allocation of resources by the board to support student learning
- parental and community involvement
- facilities management
- issues of teacher qualifications and the assignment of teachers that may affect the improvement of student achievement.

Board accreditation

Board reviews will yield information that will require policy decisions by the Ministry of Education. Many jurisdictions expect that the publication of information about student performance is sufficient to motivate the changes required. Other jurisdictions establish "consequences" for boards and schools that underperform.

In some cases, the review process is designed to be facilitative, to help boards fulfil their roles. Some jurisdictions provide guidance, assistance, and training to help boards develop improvement planning processes. In others, the review process is more like an audit or an accreditation process, with a summative evaluation and specific directions on how the board must proceed.

In the jurisdictions we investigated, reviews have a wide range of consequences. In each case, as an indication of the jurisdiction's commitment to public accountability, the findings and recommendations of the reviews are made public, so that the public can make informed decisions about the school or board. Many jurisdictions set targets for improvement in student performance, and boards face consequences if they fail to meet the targets.

Almost all jurisdictions provide for government intervention in underperforming schools or boards. The range of legislated interventions includes the following:

- a requirement that improvement plans be submitted to the ministry or department of education
- more frequent follow-up reviews
- dismissal of the director
- changes in the board's accreditation rating
- dismissal of the board, or the takeover of its operations by the government.

- providing parents and local communities with information on schools and boards in their area
- increasing public confidence in the achievements of Ontario's students and public support for the education system.

It would benefit boards by:

- increasing public confidence in district school boards
- increasing awareness in the community of a board's needs and successes
- promoting a coordinated approach to measuring and improving student achievement
- providing information upon which strategic decisions to direct improvement in a board's performance can be based.

It would benefit the Ministry of Education by:

- providing detailed analyses of each board's performance, as well as an aggregate picture of the performance of boards across the province
- enhancing the ministry's ability to assess school and board performance and to direct assistance where it is needed to improve student learning in the province
- promoting accountability and public confidence in the education system.

Recommendation 33: That:

a. the government create an agency to conduct independent reviews of district school boards on a regular basis;

b. this agency be an arm's-length agency of the Ministry of Education and report its findings publicly; and

c. this agency be the same agency as described in recommendation 22, with the authority to conduct the school reviews described in that recommendation.

Recommendation 34: That the board review process assess a board's success in promoting a high level of student achievement in its jurisdiction and that it include an examination of the following:

- information about student performance and improvement
- curriculum delivery in schools
- staffing policies and practices, including staff development

- board policies
- board and school improvement plans
- the process used by the board to review its schools' performance
- the allocation of resources by the board to support student learning
- parental and community involvement
- facilities management
- issues of teacher qualifications and the assignment of teachers that may affect the improvement of student achievement.

Board accreditation

Board reviews will yield information that will require policy decisions by the Ministry of Education. Many jurisdictions expect that the publication of information about student performance is sufficient to motivate the changes required. Other jurisdictions establish "consequences" for boards and schools that underperform.

In some cases, the review process is designed to be facilitative, to help boards fulfil their roles. Some jurisdictions provide guidance, assistance, and training to help boards develop improvement planning processes. In others, the review process is more like an audit or an accreditation process, with a summative evaluation and specific directions on how the board must proceed.

In the jurisdictions we investigated, reviews have a wide range of consequences. In each case, as an indication of the jurisdiction's commitment to public accountability, the findings and recommendations of the reviews are made public, so that the public can make informed decisions about the school or board. Many jurisdictions set targets for improvement in student performance, and boards face consequences if they fail to meet the targets.

Almost all jurisdictions provide for government intervention in underperforming schools or boards. The range of legislated interventions includes the following:

- a requirement that improvement plans be submitted to the ministry or department of education
- more frequent follow-up reviews
- dismissal of the director
- changes in the board's accreditation rating
- dismissal of the board, or the takeover of its operations by the government.

In many jurisdictions, including Massachusetts, Nevada, and Texas, the review process leads to a rating or accreditation. Poor performance results in an intervention. In almost all cases, if performance does not improve over a specified period of time, the ministry or department of education takes over the operations of the board. Our research has identified a few instances where this has occurred, or where a director has been replaced.

Ontario school boards are created by legislation and they must operate within the legislative and regulatory framework established by the Ministry of Education. An independent board review process in Ontario should hold boards accountable for their implementation of ministry policy, including curriculum policy, and ensure that their spending is within ministry guidelines. It should have the authority to recommend supports or interventions, where necessary, to help boards fulfil their responsibilities and support their schools as they work towards continuous improvement. The independent review process should also be substantial enough to identify emerging trends and issues that need to be addressed at the provincial level.

If "it's all about improvement"—the improvement of student achievement—we have an obligation to hold boards accountable for their contributions to that goal. We have already recommended the publication of information about performance, as well as the publication of reports arising from the school and board self-evaluations and from the independent reviews, together with their recommendations. Communities have a right to know how their schools and boards are performing. The province has a responsibility to recognize exemplary practices and high levels of achievement, and to insist that strategies be put in place to bring about swift improvements where underperformance is an issue.

For these reasons, we are recommending that the independent review process lead to the accreditation of school boards. We use the word "accreditation" because it denotes a process that includes the following elements:

- established standards of performance
- a thorough public and independent review of each board's performance
- a published assessment, by the independent review team, of each board's performance
- recommendations for improvement, where appropriate
- a follow-up process that ensures action is taken on the recommendations.

We are further recommending that there be three levels of accreditation, as follows:

- fully accredited
- accredited with conditions
- referred to the Minister of Education with recommendations for action.

If the independent review team determines that a board should be "accredited with conditions," the conditions would be specified and a monitoring process put in place. The conditions would relate to the need for the board to set and work towards improvement goals. The board would be re-reviewed within two years of the initial review to determine whether it had fulfilled the conditions. When it had, it would receive full accreditation.

In the rare case where the independent review team determines that a board should be "referred to the Minister of Education with recommendations for action," the Ministry of Education would work with the board to develop an action plan for improvement. The board's community would be invited to contribute to the development of the action plan and it would be assured that measures were being taken to support its schools while the action plan was being implemented. A monitoring process would be put in place and the board and its schools would be re-reviewed on a regular basis by the independent agency until the board had met the goals of its action plan. When it had, it would receive full accreditation.

We want to make it clear that all school and board reviews, both the self-evaluations and the independent reviews, and all improvement and action plans must have as their focus the improvement of the level of student achievement. "It's all about improvement!"

Recommendation 35: That the independent agency referred to in recommendation 33 design an accreditation process that includes three levels of accreditation, as follows:

- fully accredited,
- accredited with conditions,
- referred to the Minister of Education with recommendations for action;

and that these reviews be scheduled as follows:

- on a five-year cycle for regular reviews,
- in the case of a board that has been "accredited with conditions," within two years following the original review, and
- in the case of a board that has been "referred to the Minister of Education with recommendations for action," on a regular basis until full accreditation has been restored.

If the independent review team determines that a board should be "accredited with conditions," the conditions would be specified and a monitoring process put in place. The conditions would relate to the need for the board to set and work towards improvement goals. The board would be re-reviewed within two years of the initial review to determine whether it had fulfilled the conditions. When it had, it would receive full accreditation.

In the rare case where the independent review team determines that a board should be "referred to the Minister of Education with recommendations for action," the Ministry of Education would work with the board to develop an action plan for improvement. The board's community would be invited to contribute to the development of the action plan and it would be assured that measures were being taken to support its schools while the action plan was being implemented. A monitoring process would be put in place and the board and its schools would be re-reviewed on a regular basis by the independent agency until the board had met the goals of its action plan. When it had, it would receive full accreditation.

We want to make it clear that all school and board reviews, both the self-evaluations and the independent reviews, and all improvement and action plans must have as their focus the improvement of the level of student achievement. "It's all about improvement!"

Recommendation 35: That the independent agency referred to in recommendation 33 design an accreditation process that includes three levels of accreditation, as follows:

- fully accredited,
- accredited with conditions,
- referred to the Minister of Education with recommendations for action;

and that these reviews be scheduled as follows:

- on a five-year cycle for regular reviews,
- in the case of a board that has been "accredited with conditions," within two years following the original review, and
- in the case of a board that has been "referred to the Minister of Education with recommendations for action," on a regular basis until full accreditation has been restored.

The education community and the Ontario public as a whole are expecting the Ministry of Education to announce that it intends to set up a system of regular board reviews. It is the right time to move forward with this initiative.

Before we can have comprehensive board reviews focused on performance data, we need to develop the kind of key indicators described in chapter 4. Then information about student performance based on those indicators must be collected and structured in an appropriate database to ensure that relevant analyses can occur.[58] We do not need to wait for all this information to be in place, however, before we begin. The review process can be implemented in phases, becoming more comprehensive as decisions are made about the information to be collected and published, and as the capacity to aggregate and compare data becomes available.

7. Summary and List of Recommendations

We said in the introduction to this report that our goal has been to make recommendations that will enable schools to improve the level of student achievement.

In addressing our mandate, we chose to begin with recommendations about mechanisms to support teacher excellence, because the quality of teaching and the learning environment are central to our goal of improving student achievement. Our recommendations in that section are aimed at ensuring that Ontario continues to have capable, well-trained, and well-supported teachers who are respected and recognized for their competence and professionalism. We believe that our recommendations about the supply of teachers, their qualifications, professional development, and assignments, if implemented, will strengthen the quality of teaching in Ontario and provide teachers with the support they need.

Our section on recognizing improvement in the performance of schools emphasizes the need to develop better student performance data—information that will allow our schools to focus with more precision on the areas of their work that need to be improved. We also emphasized that the purpose of better performance data is *improvement*. We suggested ways in which the question "How good is our school?" can be answered. We discussed the importance of school and board self-evaluation processes that lead to improvement plans. If these improvement plans are public, they will act as a major force for increased effectiveness.

Our consideration of the issue of school organization is built primarily on the aspects of that subject that were brought to our attention during our consultations. We believe that we have accurately reflected the concerns we heard and that we have made sensible suggestions for improvement in a variety of important areas.

Finally, we outlined a process for board reviews that we believe will lead to improved public accountability. It will also strengthen the important role that district school boards play in supporting the continuous improvement of their schools and continuous improvement in the level of achievement of the students in their schools.

During the last few years, many changes have been implemented in our education system. Excellent progress has been made in meeting the challenges posed by these changes, particularly in the areas of curriculum, assessment, and reporting. Nonetheless, much remains to be done. We acknowledge that the time required to implement all of the recommendations of this report may well span several successive governments, but we maintain that there is an urgent need to keep moving forward, to keep improving.

Dedication to improvement is the hallmark of effective organizations. We invite all who are vitally committed, as we are, to a strong and vibrant publicly funded elementary and secondary school system to embrace the importance of continuous improvement. No matter how successful a school, a board, or an education system is, there will always be room for improvement.

We acknowledge that many of our recommendations are substantial, that they pose challenges and require additional resources, and that they cannot be implemented overnight. Meaningful change takes time. Improvement, as we said in our introduction, requires both pressure, in the form of a comprehensive accountability framework, and support, in the form of an investment in building the capacity for continuous improvement. It is often much easier to do the former than the latter.

We need to do both. Those of our recommendations that related to capacity building (in areas like training, time, and resources) are as important as our recommendations on ways to strengthen the framework of accountability (by developing performance indicators, collecting data, and reviewing school and board performance). Real, lasting improvement depends on our ability to achieve a balance between these two forces.

We want to thank all those who gave generously of their time, opinions, and expertise to help us. We particularly want to thank the students with whom we met. As always, we were immensely impressed with their insights, persuasiveness, and suggestions. We look forward to the time when they are the leaders of this province. We will, at that time, be very well served indeed.

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: That the Ministry of Education and the Ontario College of Teachers:

a. develop a joint system, using their respective databases, to gather solid information (including information about the assignment of teachers to subjects and grades outside their area of qualifications, the extent of the use of emergency provisions for the hiring of uncertified teachers, and the extent of the use of letters of permission); and

b. use this information to provide sophisticated and reasonable advice to the appropriate ministers, the faculties of education, and district school boards on issues related to teacher supply and demand.

Recommendation 2: That, consistent with other duties of the Ontario College of Teachers, the Ministry of Education transfer authority for issuing letters of permission to the college.

Recommendation 3: That the government approve a regulation governing the Ontario College of Teachers' accreditation of faculties of education as soon as possible.

Recommendation 4: That the Ministry of Education ensure that appropriate resources are provided through the education funding formula to cover the release time and training costs of *both* the new teachers *and* the mentors who will be involved in the formal induction system for beginning teachers that is part of the ministry's teacher testing initiative.

Recommendation 5: That the Ministry of Education encourage schools to organize teachers of Grades 4 to 6 to deliver clusters of connected subjects.

Recommendation 6: That school boards ensure that teachers in Grades 7 and 8 are assigned to teach according to the subject qualifications listed on their certificates.

Recommendation 7: That the Ministry of Education conduct an audit of the practice by district school boards of assigning teachers to grade levels and/or subjects that are not on their certificates of qualification, and that the information gathered be used for the purposes of evaluating the

prevalence of the practice, determining its causes, and proposing solutions, including regulatory amendments, that support continuous school improvement.

Recommendation 8: That the Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the Ontario College of Teachers, examine the possibility of transferring responsibility to the college for regulating the assignment of certified teachers to grades and subjects outside of those in which they are qualified to teach.

Recommendation 9: That the Ministry of Education increase its level of support for professional development within the education funding formula to an amount equal to 1.6 per cent of the payroll of district school boards, and that it require boards to use these funds exclusively for the professional development of their employees.

Recommendation 10: That the Ministry of Education, in consultation with the entire education community, review the school year calendar to determine how professional development for teachers and other school staff, targeted at improving the level of student achievement, can be organized and the appropriate time and resources dedicated to it.

Recommendation 11: That the Ministry of Education, in developing the framework for the requirement that teachers participate in professional development programs to maintain their certification, ensure that the framework is flexible enough to encompass the learning needs of teachers that are related to board and school improvement plans.

Recommendation 12: That the Ministry of Education, in partnership with the Ontario College of Teachers, trustees' associations, teachers' federations, provincial parent and education organizations, and the private sector develop a program to identify, recognize, and reward exemplary teachers in a way that would publicize the work of these teachers and promote the sharing of their best practices to foster continuous school improvement.

Recommendation 13: That the Ministry of Education, in partnership with the Ontario College of Teachers, trustees' associations, teachers' federations, provincial parent and education organizations, and the private sector sponsor an annual symposium featuring the work of exemplary teachers, as one way of publicizing successful efforts to improve schools.

Recommendation 14: That the Ministry of Education, in cooperation with major education organizations, commission a review of the role of the principal, and that this review cover a range of issues that includes job description, recruitment, retention, expectations, and financial and other incentives, with a view to ensuring that the job remains attractive to high-quality candidates.

Recommendation 15: That:

a. the Ministry of Education include principals and all academic supervisory officers in its plan to base recertification in part on professional development; and

b. the Ontario College of Teachers ensure that the principal's course, academic supervisory officer's course, and accredited professional learning programs for principals and academic supervisory officers meet and anticipate the changing needs of their professional roles.

Recommendation 16: That the Ministry of Education direct the Education Quality and Accountability Office to conduct province-wide tests to assess the level of achievement in science of students in Grades 4 and 8.

Recommendation 17: That the Ministry of Education define a set of key indicators of student achievement for both elementary and secondary schools, and that the indicators include those listed on page 28 of this report, as well as those outlined in the sample report cards at the end of this report.

Recommendation 18: That the Ministry of Education take appropriate steps to ensure that the key indicators of student achievement described in recommendation 17 are reported, reliably and consistently, for each school in the form of a school report card; for each district school board in the form of a board report card; and for the province in the form of a provincial report card.

Recommendation 19: That the Ministry of Education, through its education funding formula, provide sufficient funding to boards and schools to support the collection and publication of consistent and reliable data on the key indicators of student achievement described in recommendation 17.

Recommendation 20: That the Ministry of Education set challenging improvement targets for the key indicators of student achievement described in recommendation 17, and focus on helping boards and schools achieve these targets.

Recommendation 21: That the Ministry of Education:

a. identify and mandate a common self-evaluation process for schools, one that is open and public; that involves a significant role for parents and, where appropriate, students; and that leads to a published improvement plan from every publicly funded school in the province; and

b. provide, through its leadership and through its funding formula, the resources needed to successfully implement this initiative.

Recommendation 22: That an agency be created to independently review schools for the following three purposes:

a. to review a sample number of schools in the province to assure the public that self-evaluations are being conducted and school improvement plans developed in a thorough and appropriate manner, following the provincially mandated format and process;

b. to conduct independent reviews of schools that are believed to be underperforming and to recommend the steps necessary to bring about immediate improvement in these schools; and

c. to provide an independent assessment of schools that are applying for "demonstration school" status (when such status is established).

Recommendation 23: That the Ministry of Education ensure that Ontario has the capacity to do the following:

a. create profiles of schools

b. group schools according to the similarity of their advantages and challenges, and

c. identify high- and low-performing schools in each group.

Recommendation 24: That:

a. the Ministry of Education develop a program to identify and recognize "demonstration schools"—that is, high-performing schools and much-improved schools—based on the concept that schools be identified as exemplary in relation to schools with similar advantages and challenges;

b. all schools identified as either high-performing or much-improved be invited to apply for "demonstration school" status;

c. before schools are identified as "demonstration schools," they be subject to an independent review; and

d. schools that are recognized as "demonstration schools" be given a financial award by the ministry, a significant portion of which must be used to share their best practices with other schools.

Recommendation 25: That:

a. the importance of classroom learning time or "time on task" be reflected in school and board improvement plans; and

b. the Ministry of Education, district school boards, and schools examine their practices with a view to minimizing interruptions to classroom learning time and maximizing the time students are involved in learning.

Recommendation 26: That principals ensure that their teaching staff hold regularly scheduled planning meetings by grade, subject, or division to focus on making instructional time more effective and improving the level of student achievement in the school.

Recommendation 27: That the Ministry of Education make a commitment to further reduce class size in the primary division.

Recommendation 28: That the Ministry of Education:

a. in conjunction with an Ontario faculty of education and schools in Ontario that operate on a "year-round" organizational model, monitor the research that is now being funded by the federal government as it relates to the effect of "year-round" organizational models on student achievement; and

b. ensure that this research is shared with district school boards.

Recommendation 29: That the Ministry of Education:

a. consider providing a one-time funding supplement for secondary schools that intend to change from a semestered to a non-semestered timetable; and

b. make it a condition of such one-time funding that the school monitor, and report to its community on, the effect of the change on student achievement levels.

Recommendation 30: That the Ministry of Education continue to support the Ontario Knowledge Network for Learning's work with public and private partners aimed at developing a vision and a plan of action for using information and communications technology to enhance learning opportunities in Ontario's schools.

Recommendation 31: That the Ministry of Education, in conjunction with district school boards, examine the issue of remedial help and take measures to ensure that schools have the flexibility and resources they need to help their students progress through school to graduation at an appropriate pace.

Recommendation 32: That the Ministry of Education, in its current review of transportation funding, work with school boards to ensure that the education funding model's provisions for student transportation allow boards to make transportation arrangements that support the goals of effective schools and continuous improvement in student achievement.

Recommendation 33: That:

a. the government create an agency to conduct independent reviews of district school boards on a regular basis;

b. this agency be an arm's-length agency of the Ministry of Education and report its findings publicly; and

c. this agency be the same agency as described in recommendation 22, with the authority to conduct the school reviews described in that recommendation.

Recommendation 34: That the board review process assess a board's success in promoting a high level of student achievement in its jurisdiction and that it include an examination of the following:

- information about student performance and improvement
- curriculum delivery in schools
- staffing policies and practices, including staff development
- board policies
- board and school improvement plans
- the process used by the board to review its schools' performance
- the allocation of resources by the board to support student learning
- parental and community involvement
- facilities management
- issues of teacher qualifications and the assignment of teachers that may affect the improvement of student achievement.

Recommendation 35: That the independent agency referred to in recommendation 33 design an accreditation process that includes three levels of accreditation, as follows:

- fully accredited,
- accredited with conditions,
- referred to the Minister of Education with recommendations for action;

and that these reviews be scheduled as follows:

- on a five-year cycle for regular reviews,
- in the case of a board that has been "accredited with conditions," within two years following the original review, and
- in the case of a board that has been "referred to the Minister of Education with recommendations for action," on a regular basis until full accreditation has been restored.

Appendix A:
Advisory Group

Organization	Name
Task Force on Effective Schools Project Leaders and Advisory Group Co-chairs	Dave Cooke Ann Vanstone
Trustees:	
Association des conseillères et des conseillers des écoles publiques de l'Ontario	Daniel Morin
Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques	Joseph Bisnaire
Ontario Public School Boards' Association	Liz Sandals
Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association	Louise Ervin
Ontario Student Trustees' Association/Association des élèves conseillères et conseillers de l'Ontario	Karl Baldauf
Principals:	
Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes	Armand Gagné
Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario	Arlene McCarthy
Ontario Principals' Council	Rick Victor
Students:	
Fédération de la jeunesse franco-ontarienne	Derrick Fournier
Ontario Catholic Student Council Federation	Andrew Vellathottam
Ontario Secondary School Students' Association	Erin Barton
Directors of Education:	
Council of Ontario Directors of Education	John Laughlin
Parents:	
Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education	Mary Ann Cuderman
Ontario Coalition for Education Reform	Bill Robson, John Bachmann
Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations	Sue Robertson
Ontario Parent Council	Greg Reid
Parents partenaires en éducation	Diane Ellis
People for Education	Annie Kidder

Teachers:

Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens	Lise Routhier-Boudreau
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario	Phyllis Benedict
Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association	Jim Smith
Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation	Earl Manners
Ontario Teachers' Federation/Fédération des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'Ontario	Roger Régimbal

Support Workers:

Canadian Union of Public Employees	Sid Ryan
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario	Phyllis Benedict
Ontario Public Service Employees' Union	Louise Rose
Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation	Earl Manners

Others:

Task Force on Effective Schools	Arlene Wright
Task Force on Effective Schools	Betty Moseley-Williams
Task Force on Effective Schools	Rémi Lessard
The Learning Partnership	Veronica Lacey

Appendix B:
Organizations Consulted

Association des conseillères et des conseillers des écoles publiques de l'Ontario

Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes

Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens

Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques

Canadian Union of Public Employees

Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario

Council of Ontario Directors of Education

Curriculum Services Canada

Education Quality and Accountability Office

Elementary Students at McMurrich/Winona Public Schools

Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario

English Catholic Student Trustees

English Public Student Trustees

Fédération de la jeunesse franco-ontarienne

French Student Trustees

National Quality Institute

Ontario Association of Deans of Education

Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education

Ontario Association of School Business Officials

Ontario Catholic School Business Officials' Association

Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association

Ontario Catholic Student Council Federation

Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association

Ontario Coalition for Education Reform

Ontario College of Teachers

Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Federation

Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations

Ontario Parent Council

Ontario Principals' Council

Ontario Public School Boards' Association

Ontario Public Service Employees' Union

Ontario Public Supervisory Officials' Association

Ontario School Counsellors' Association

Ontario Secondary School Students' Association

Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation

Ontario Student Trustees' Association/Association des élèves conseillères et conseillers de l'Ontario

Ontario Teachers' Federation/Fédération des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'Ontario

Parents partenaires en éducation

People for Education

The Assessment Training Consortium

Appendix C:

How Other Jurisdictions Monitor School and Board Performance

Jurisdiction	Information collected to measure performance	Regular reporting of results to the public	Legislated school (S) and/or board (B) reviews	How school and/or board reviews are carried out	How information from reviews is used
Alberta	Jurisdiction profiles: • student achievement • demographics • expenditures • staff statistics • enrolment and graduation data • school characteristics	Yes	S – No B – No	N/A	N/A
Australia – State of Victoria	School annual reports: • student achievement • enrolment, attendance, and graduation data • student, parent, and staff survey results • school environment • school management (e.g., professional development) • resource management	Yes	S – Yes B – No	School self-assessments are submitted for review annually. Independent reviews/ verifications occur every three years. State benchmarks and a "like schools" strategy are used to set targets and evaluate progress. Annual school financial audits.	Results of school reviews are used by schools to develop 3-year improvement plans, and by the government to determine renewal of school charters.
British Columbia	School district annual reports: • student achievement • Grade 12 exam results • graduation rates • student transition and completion rates • class size • financial data and budgets	Yes	S – Yes B – No	Annual school improvement plans are mandatory. Schools undergo independent peer reviews every 6 years to validate school improvement process.	N/A

Jurisdiction	Information collected to measure performance	Regular reporting of results to the public	Legislated school (S) and/or board (B) reviews	How school and/or board reviews are carried out	How information from reviews is used
California	Academic performance index: • student achievement • attendance • graduation • high-school exit exam results Similar-schools ranking: • student mobility, ethnicity, socio-economic status • staff qualifications • average class size • English-as-a-second-language students	Yes	S – Yes B – No	Approximately 430 schools are reviewed each year. Only schools designated as "underperforming" within a range of set criteria are reviewed. Schools that fall within the range apply for the Immediate Intervention/ Underperforming Schools Program.	School reviews result in the creation of an extensive action plan. The school receives a minimum of $50,000 to implement strategies for improvement. After a follow-up review 12 months later, further interventions may occur for failure to meet agreed-upon targets, or schools may be rewarded for exceeding targets. Outside of the review process, another rewards program is in place for schools in the state that exceed state targets.
England and Wales	Combination of attitudinal and statistical indicators: • student achievement • student attitudes towards learning • school safety • student demographics • quality of teaching • quality of curriculum • student mobility • graduation rates • quality of school management • quality of school facilities • quality of resources (staffing, accommodation, learning resources)	Yes	S – Yes B – Yes	Schools: Each school is inspected on a 6-year cycle (short or full inspections). Four key areas of the review include educational standards, quality of the education provided by the school, management of financial resources, and the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of pupils. Local education authorities (LEAs): Reviews of LEAs are conducted every 5 years. Five key areas of review include strategic management, school improvement, special education provisions, access, and expenditures. A summary of the final report is made available to the public.	Schools and LEAs have 40 days following receipt of their final report to develop an action plan in response to the review's findings. Schools are designated as "effective," "requiring special measures," or "underachieving." Specific rewards or interventions are outlined for each case. Underperforming schools and LEAs are scheduled for follow-up reviews 12 months after the first review.

Appendix C:

How Other Jurisdictions Monitor School and Board Performance

Jurisdiction	Information collected to measure performance	Regular reporting of results to the public	Legislated school (S) and/or board (B) reviews	How school and/or board reviews are carried out	How information from reviews is used
Alberta	Jurisdiction profiles: • student achievement • demographics • expenditures • staff statistics • enrolment and graduation data • school characteristics	Yes	S – No B – No	N/A	N/A
Australia – State of Victoria	School annual reports: • student achievement • enrolment, attendance, and graduation data • student, parent, and staff survey results • school environment • school management (e.g., professional development) • resource management	Yes	S – Yes B – No	School self-assessments are submitted for review annually. Independent reviews/ verifications occur every three years. State benchmarks and a "like schools" strategy are used to set targets and evaluate progress. Annual school financial audits.	Results of school reviews are used by schools to develop 3-year improvement plans, and by the government to determine renewal of school charters.
British Columbia	School district annual reports: • student achievement • Grade 12 exam results • graduation rates • student transition and completion rates • class size • financial data and budgets	Yes	S – Yes B – No	Annual school improvement plans are mandatory. Schools undergo independent peer reviews every 6 years to validate school improvement process.	N/A

Jurisdiction	Information collected to measure performance	Regular reporting of results to the public	Legislated school (S) and/or board (B) reviews	How school and/or board reviews are carried out	How information from reviews is used
California	Academic performance index: • student achievement • attendance • graduation • high-school exit exam results Similar-schools ranking: • student mobility, ethnicity, socio-economic status • staff qualifications • average class size • English-as-a-second-language students	Yes	S – Yes B – No	Approximately 430 schools are reviewed each year. Only schools designated as "underperforming" within a range of set criteria are reviewed. Schools that fall within the range apply for the Immediate Intervention/ Underperforming Schools Program.	School reviews result in the creation of an extensive action plan. The school receives a minimum of $50,000 to implement strategies for improvement. After a follow-up review 12 months later, further interventions may occur for failure to meet agreed-upon targets, or schools may be rewarded for exceeding targets. Outside of the review process, another rewards program is in place for schools in the state that exceed state targets.
England and Wales	Combination of attitudinal and statistical indicators: • student achievement • student attitudes towards learning • school safety • student demographics • quality of teaching • quality of curriculum • student mobility • graduation rates • quality of school management • quality of school facilities • quality of resources (staffing, accommodation, learning resources)	Yes	S – Yes B – Yes	Schools: Each school is inspected on a 6-year cycle (short or full inspections). Four key areas of the review include educational standards, quality of the education provided by the school, management of financial resources, and the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of pupils. Local education authorities (LEAs): Reviews of LEAs are conducted every 5 years. Five key areas of review include strategic management, school improvement, special education provisions, access, and expenditures. A summary of the final report is made available to the public.	Schools and LEAs have 40 days following receipt of their final report to develop an action plan in response to the review's findings. Schools are designated as "effective," "requiring special measures," or "underachieving." Specific rewards or interventions are outlined for each case. Underperforming schools and LEAs are scheduled for follow-up reviews 12 months after the first review.

Jurisdiction	Information collected to measure performance	Regular reporting of results to the public	Legislated school (S) and/or board (B) reviews	How school and/or board reviews are carried out	How information from reviews is used
Florida	Florida school indicators: • student characteristics • disciplinary actions (e.g., suspensions) • graduation rates • mobility • dropout rates • special program data • student achievement data • staff information, including qualifications and salaries • class size • school community data	Yes	S – Yes B – Yes	Schools: No formal school review process is in place; however, school improvement plans are mandatory and must be submitted to the district office for review in year 1. In year 2, schools are required to show evidence of progress. Districts: Combined reviews consist of: "performance" reviews (operations, including delivery of education services) and "best financial management" reviews. Districts reviewed are identified by the state Legislature or they volunteer for review.	Schools: A program exists to recognize exemplary schools. A strategy is in place for schools that do not show progress in 2 consecutive years. Consequences range from assistance to direct intervention. Districts: Districts are required to respond to the recommendations of the performance and financial reviews, but there are no formal consequences.
Massachusetts	Data includes: • student demographics • enrolment in special education and English-language proficiency programs • student performance on Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System tests • high-school student destinations • dropout rates • technology standards • school expenditures • average teacher salary	Yes	S – Yes B – Yes	Schools: There are 3 types of school reviews: initial panel reviews (school visit), intermediate fact-finding reviews, and final diagnostic reviews for school improvement planning. Districts: Performance reviews began in 2000 and cover the following: curriculum, instruction, and assessment; teacher quality; student performance; student support programs and services; leadership and governance; and business and financial management practices. Districts are reviewed on a 5-year cycle.	Underperforming districts are reviewed on a more frequent basis. The state will intervene if a district does not improve following targeted assistance efforts.
New Zealand	Data includes: • school demographics • student achievement results • school leavers • student destinations • teacher quality and supply • early childhood attendance • special education • Maori education • school management practices	Yes	S – Yes B – Yes	On average, schools and districts are reviewed on a 3- to 4-year cycle. If a school or district does not meet standards or does not improve, it will be reviewed more frequently. Reviews focus on the following: financial management, management of staff-performance, innovation, school-self review findings, principals' performance, teachers' performance, and curriculum delivery.	Final reports are used by principals and boards of trustees to identify areas for improvement. They are also used by the state to identify areas where assistance is needed. If schools fail to improve after a series of follow-up reviews, the state will intervene (e.g., school closure or takeover).

Jurisdiction	Information collected to measure performance	Regular reporting of results to the public	Legislated school (S) and/or board (B) reviews	How school and/or board reviews are carried out	How information from reviews is used
Rhode Island	Data includes: • specialized data from schools (includes data collected as part of the School Accountability for Learning and Teaching, or SALT, program) • discipline and suspension data • enrolment • state test data • expenditures and revenue • school performance targets • demographic data from U.S. census • pupil summary data • English proficiency data • dropout data	Yes	S – Yes B – No	Under the SALT program, school self-evaluation and school improvement planning are mandatory. SALT also includes school reviews. All schools are reviewed on a 5-year cycle. A 4-day visit focuses on learning, teaching, and the school "climate."	School visits are intended to help schools clarify their school improvement plans. The district and state do not act in response to the findings of the reviews. The state does identify underperforming schools. An outreach and technical support program is in place, delivered by regional support teams. A "like schools" program allows schools to monitor their progress compared to similar schools statewide.
Scotland	Data includes: • financial expenditure • attendance • school-leaver destinations • student achievement • student and parent surveys • indicators of leadership quality • indicators of teaching quality • school partnerships • school organization and use of resources • effectiveness and deployment of staff • quality of courses and programs • quality of student attainment • ability to meet pupils' needs	Yes	S – Yes B – Yes	Schools: Schools are required to conduct self-evaluations annually. At present, independent reviews are conducted of a random sample of schools every year; however, a regular cycle of independent reviews is being implemented. Indicators or benchmarks set by the government form the basis of the school self-evaluations and the independent reviews. Local education authorities (LEAs): LEAs are reviewed on a 5-year cycle to determine how well they are supporting the work of the schools. A review of the efficiency of the LEA's operations is included. Teams conduct surveys, interviews, and school visits.	The school and its LEA publish an action plan within 4 months of the report's publication, showing how they will address the report's main points. The school is revisited about 2 years after the report is published to see what progress has been made. Conclusions are sent to parents. If satisfactory progress has not been made, further action will be required of the school and the LEA. The results of school reviews are used to share the best practices of schools and LEAs.

Jurisdiction	Information collected to measure performance	Regular reporting of results to the public	Legislated school (S) and/or board (B) reviews	How school and/or board reviews are carried out	How information from reviews is used
Florida	Florida school indicators: • student characteristics • disciplinary actions (e.g., suspensions) • graduation rates • mobility • dropout rates • special program data • student achievement data • staff information, including qualifications and salaries • class size • school community data	Yes	S – Yes B – Yes	Schools: No formal school review process is in place; however, school improvement plans are mandatory and must be submitted to the district office for review in year 1. In year 2, schools are required to show evidence of progress. Districts: Combined reviews consist of: "performance" reviews (operations, including delivery of education services) and "best financial management" reviews. Districts reviewed are identified by the state Legislature or they volunteer for review.	Schools: A program exists to recognize exemplary schools. A strategy is in place for schools that do not show progress in 2 consecutive years. Consequences range from assistance to direct intervention. Districts: Districts are required to respond to the recommendations of the performance and financial reviews, but there are no formal consequences.
Massachusetts	Data includes: • student demographics • enrolment in special education and English-language proficiency programs • student performance on Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System tests • high-school student destinations • dropout rates • technology standards • school expenditures • average teacher salary	Yes	S – Yes B – Yes	Schools: There are 3 types of school reviews: initial panel reviews (school visit), intermediate fact-finding reviews, and final diagnostic reviews for school improvement planning. Districts: Performance reviews began in 2000 and cover the following: curriculum, instruction, and assessment; teacher quality; student performance; student support programs and services; leadership and governance; and business and financial management practices. Districts are reviewed on a 5-year cycle.	Underperforming districts are reviewed on a more frequent basis. The state will intervene if a district does not improve following targeted assistance efforts.
New Zealand	Data includes: • school demographics • student achievement results • school leavers • student destinations • teacher quality and supply • early childhood attendance • special education • Maori education • school management practices	Yes	S – Yes B – Yes	On average, schools and districts are reviewed on a 3- to 4-year cycle. If a school or district does not meet standards or does not improve, it will be reviewed more frequently. Reviews focus on the following: financial management, management of staff-performance, innovation, school-self review findings, principals' performance, teachers' performance, and curriculum delivery.	Final reports are used by principals and boards of trustees to identify areas for improvement. They are also used by the state to identify areas where assistance is needed. If schools fail to improve after a series of follow-up reviews, the state will intervene (e.g., school closure or takeover).

Jurisdiction	Information collected to measure performance	Regular reporting of results to the public	Legislated school (S) and/or board (B) reviews	How school and/or board reviews are carried out	How information from reviews is used
Rhode Island	Data includes: • specialized data from schools (includes data collected as part of the School Accountability for Learning and Teaching, or SALT, program) • discipline and suspension data • enrolment • state test data • expenditures and revenue • school performance targets • demographic data from U.S. census • pupil summary data • English proficiency data • dropout data	Yes	S – Yes B – No	Under the SALT program, school self-evaluation and school improvement planning are mandatory. SALT also includes school reviews. All schools are reviewed on a 5-year cycle. A 4-day visit focuses on learning, teaching, and the school "climate."	School visits are intended to help schools clarify their school improvement plans. The district and state do not act in response to the findings of the reviews. The state does identify underperforming schools. An outreach and technical support program is in place, delivered by regional support teams. A "like schools" program allows schools to monitor their progress compared to similar schools statewide.
Scotland	Data includes: • financial expenditure • attendance • school-leaver destinations • student achievement • student and parent surveys • indicators of leadership quality • indicators of teaching quality • school partnerships • school organization and use of resources • effectiveness and deployment of staff • quality of courses and programs • quality of student attainment • ability to meet pupils' needs	Yes	S – Yes B – Yes	Schools: Schools are required to conduct self-evaluations annually. At present, independent reviews are conducted of a random sample of schools every year; however, a regular cycle of independent reviews is being implemented. Indicators or benchmarks set by the government form the basis of the school self-evaluations and the independent reviews. Local education authorities (LEAs): LEAs are reviewed on a 5-year cycle to determine how well they are supporting the work of the schools. A review of the efficiency of the LEA's operations is included. Teams conduct surveys, interviews, and school visits.	The school and its LEA publish an action plan within 4 months of the report's publication, showing how they will address the report's main points. The school is revisited about 2 years after the report is published to see what progress has been made. Conclusions are sent to parents. If satisfactory progress has not been made, further action will be required of the school and the LEA. The results of school reviews are used to share the best practices of schools and LEAs.

Jurisdiction	Information collected to measure performance	Regular reporting of results to the public	Legislated school (S) and/or board (B) reviews	How school and/or board reviews are carried out	How information from reviews is used
Texas	Accountability data: • attendance • dropout data • student achievement data • student demographics and achievement\college admissions • student performance on exit exams, and graduation rates • staff profiles • program profiles • expenditures	Yes	S – Yes B – Yes	Schools: Three types of on-site reviews are conducted: "accreditation," "corrective," or "combined." Reviews are conducted by peer review teams and include a combination of interviews, roundtable discussions (e.g., with parents), campus tours, classroom observations, and document reviews. Districts: Districts are evaluated on their effectiveness and level of compliance.	There are four accountability ratings: exemplary, acceptable, recognized, and low-performing. Low-performing schools and districts are required to submit improvement plans for state reviews and on-site peer reviews. A series of interventions may occur, including assistance. If a school or district does not improve in 3 to 4 years, the state determines additional sanctions and interventions.

Jurisdiction	Information collected to measure performance	Regular reporting of results to the public	Legislated school (S) and/or board (B) reviews	How school and/or board reviews are carried out	How information from reviews is used
Texas	Accountability data: • attendance • dropout data • student achievement data • student demographics and achievement\college admissions • student performance on exit exams, and graduation rates • staff profiles • program profiles • expenditures	Yes	S – Yes B – Yes	Schools: Three types of on-site reviews are conducted: "accreditation," "corrective," or "combined." Reviews are conducted by peer review teams and include a combination of interviews, roundtable discussions (e.g., with parents), campus tours, classroom observations, and document reviews. Districts: Districts are evaluated on their effectiveness and level of compliance.	There are four accountability ratings: exemplary, acceptable, recognized, and low-performing. Low-performing schools and districts are required to submit improvement plans for state reviews and on-site peer reviews. A series of interventions may occur, including assistance. If a school or district does not improve in 3 to 4 years, the state determines additional sanctions and interventions.

Notes

Note: Websites cited below were accessed during the course of the task force's research, between January and June 2001. They may not be accessible after publication of this report, or the information cited may no longer be available at the website address shown. The Task Force on Effective Schools takes no responsibility for the accessibility of the sites listed.

Chapter 1, Introduction

1. John McBeath, *Schools Must Speak for Themselves: The Case for School Self-Evaluation* (London: Routledge, 1999), 90.

2. D.W. Livingstone, D.J. Hart, and L.E. Davie, eds., *Public Attitudes Towards Education in Ontario 2001: The 13th OISE/UT Survey*, Orbit Monograph (Toronto: OISE/UT Press, 2001), 7–9.

3. Ontario, Ministry of Education, "Backgrounder: Task force on effective schools – Terms of Reference," January 22, 2001, <www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/nr/01.01/bg0122.html>.

Chapter 2, Defining an Effective School

4. L. Lezotte, "Designing the Effective Learning System" (paper presented at the 18th Annual Effective Schools Conference of the National School Conference Institute, Phoenix, Arizona, March 2001).

5. Noreen Jacka, "What Makes a Good School?" adapted and updated by Margaret Oldfield and Jennifer Jenson, *CERIS Themes (Canadian Education Research Information System)*, 2001, <http://ceris.schoolnet.ca/e/goodschool1.html>.

6. Noreen Jacka, "What Makes a Good School?" op. cit., and David Reynolds et al., "An Introduction to School Effectiveness Research," in *The International Handbook of School Effectiveness Research*, eds. Charles Teddlie and David Reynolds (London: Falmer Press, 2000), 3.

7. Ontario Catholic Schools Trustees' Association, "Task Force on Effective Schools: A Catholic Response" (Toronto: the Association, 2001), 1.

8. Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes, Presentation to the Task Force on Effective Schools (Toronto: the Association, 2001), 1.

9. John Gray et al., *Improving Schools: Performance and Potential* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999), 33.

10. Andy Hargreaves and Michael Fullan, *What's Worth Fighting for Out There?* (Toronto: Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation, 1998), 72.

11. Michael Fullan, "Education Reform: Are We on the Right Track?" *Education Canada*, 38, no. 3 (Fall 1998), 3. Also available online at: <www.acea.ca/educan/edreform.phtml>.

12. Ibid.

13. Bruce M. King and Fred M. Newmann, "Will Teacher Learning Advance School Goals?" *Phi Delta Kappan*, 81, no. 8 (April 2000), 577.

14. Linda Darling-Hammond and Deborah Loewenberg Ball, *Teaching for High Standards: What Policymakers Need to Know and Be Able to Do* (New York: National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1997). Also available online at: <www.negp.gov/reports/highstds.htm>.

15. Lawrence Ingvarson, *Strengthening the Profession? A Comparison of Recent Reforms in the U.K and the U.S.A*, Quality Teaching Series, no. 4 (Deakin, Australia: Australian College of Education, 2001), 6.

16. Andy Hargreaves and Michael Fullan, *What's Worth Fighting for Out There?* (Toronto: Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation, 1998), 98.

17. Lawrence Ingvarson, op. cit., 10.

18. Gregor A. Ramsey, *Quality Matters: Revitalising Teaching: Critical Times, Critical Choices: Report of the Review of Teacher Education, New South Wales* (Sydney: NSW Department of Education, 2000); J. Brophy, ed., *Advances in Research on Teaching, Vol. 2: Teachers' Knowledge of Subject Matter as It Relates to Their Teaching Practice* (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1991); Gavin McCrone, *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century* ([Edinburgh]: Committee of Inquiry Into Professional Conditions of Service for Teachers, 2000), and available online at: <www.mccronecommittee.org.uk/documents/TP21/tp21-00.htm>; D.C. Berliner, "The Nature of Expertise in Teaching" in *Effective and Responsible Teaching: The New Synthesis*, eds. Fritz K. Oser, Andreas Dick, and Jean-Luc Patry (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1992), 227–248; Lee S. Shulman, "Knowledge and Teaching: Foundations of the New Reform," *Harvard Educational Review*, 57, no. 1 (Feb. 1987), 1–22; Michael Fullan et al., *The Rise and Stall of Teacher Education Reform* (Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1998).

19. An Ontario Teacher's Certificate of Qualification lists the "divisions" and subjects in which the teacher is qualified to teach. The certificate and its contents are governed by Regulation 184/97 of the Ontario College of Teachers Act, entitled "Teacher Qualifications." At present, teachers in Ontario qualify to teach two consecutive divisions in the school system, as follows: (1) Primary/Junior (Kindergarten to Grade 6): these teachers are considered generalists, able to teach the entire mandated curriculum for these grades; (2) Junior/Intermediate (Grades 4 to 10): these teachers are also considered generalists, able to teach the entire mandated curriculum for these grades, plus one teachable subject from the approved curriculum for Grades 7 and 8 (e.g., English, mathematics, science); (3) Intermediate/Senior (Grades 7 to 12): these teachers qualify to teach two teachable subjects from the Intermediate and Senior teaching options list.

20. "Operations of Schools – General," *Revised Regulations of Ontario 1990*, Reg. 298, s. 21.

21. Under section 8(1) of the Education Act, the Minister of Education may "grant a letter of permission to a board authorizing the board to employ a person who is not a member of the Ontario College of Teachers to teach in an elementary or secondary school" for a period not exceeding one year. The number of unqualified people working as temporary teachers under letters of permission has increased from 85 in 1997–98 to 844 so far in 2000–01.

22. Ontario, Ministry of Education, "Government fulfills promise to test teachers," May 11, 2000, <www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/nr/00.05/test.html>.

23. Sharon Feiman-Nemser et al., *A Conceptual Review of Literature on New Teacher Induction* (Lansing, MI: National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching, Michigan State University, 1999), 17, and available online at: <www.ericsp.org/pages/digests/feiman.pdf>; Louise Stoll, "Evaluating Induction Programs: Do They Work?" Orbit 22, no. 1 (Feb. 1991).

24. The assignment of teachers to levels or subjects that, according to their certificates, they are not qualified to teach, is permitted by section 19 of Ontario Regulation 298 ("Operations of Schools – General," op. cit.).

25. Ontario College of Teachers Public Register Database for Additional Basic Qualifications and Additional Qualifications.

26. Ontario, Education Improvement Commission, *The Road Ahead – V: A Report on Improving Student Achievement* (Toronto: the Commission, 2000), 12.

27. Ontario, Ministry of Education, "Early reading strategy will help students improve," June 1, 2001, <www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/nr/01.06/nr0601.html>.

28. Michael Fullan, *The New Meaning of Educational Change*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: Irwin, 2001), 127.

29. The Ontario College of Teachers has documented a steady rise in the number of requests for permission to appoint as principals teachers who do not hold a principal's qualifications. In 1997–98, two such appointments were approved. During the current school year, there have been 24 such approvals. The respective numbers for vice-principal are three in 1997–98 and 178 in 2000–01.

30. John Schofield, "Saving Our Schools," *Maclean's*, May 14, 2001, 26.

Chapter 4, Recognizing School Improvement

31. Visit the following websites to see what other jurisdictions are doing in the area of measuring student achievement levels: <www.tea.state.tx.us/peims>; <www.ridoe.net/ed_data/infoworks.htm>; <www.ofsted.gov.uk/public/index.htm>; <www.meq.gouv.qc.ca/GR-PUB/m_englis.htm>.

32. For example, see *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Language* (Toronto: Ministry of Education, 1997), 3. Also available online at: <www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/curr97l.html>.

33. Douglas B. Reeves, "Standards Are Not Enough: Essential Transformation for Successful Schools" (paper presented at the 18th Annual Effective Schools Conference of the National School Conference Institute, Phoenix, Arizona, March 2001).

34. Michael Fullan, *The New Meaning of Educational Change*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: Irwin, 2001), 227. Michael Fullan was engaged by the British government to provide an independent review of this national strategy. In this recent book, he concludes that the gains are real (see pages 225–236). He also outlines issues and suggestions for improvement related to this initiative that are well worth reading.

35. Newfoundland has implemented the kinds of surveys described, and the results are reflected in its school report cards. For an example of a Newfoundland school report card, visit <www.sae.k12.nf.ca/schoolreport99-00.htm>.

36. To see the kind of information collected by these jurisdictions, visit their websites: Quebec <www.meq.gouv.qc.ca>; California <www.cde.ca.gov>; United Kingdom <www.ofsted.gov.uk)>.

37. John McBeath, *Schools Must Speak for Themselves: The Case for School Self-Evaluation* (London: Routledge, 1999), 1.

38. For more information on the models of school self-evaluation used by these jurisdictions, visit the following websites: British Columbia Ministry of Education, "B.C. Public School Accreditation Program: A Manual for Schools," 2000, <www.bced.gov.bc.ca/accreditation/manual>; Scottish Executive Department of Education, "General Publications – Self-Evaluation and Management," <www.scotland.gov.uk/hmie/selfevalpubs.htm>; Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, "SALT: School Accountability for Learning and Teaching [program]," <www.ridoe.net/schoolimprove/salt/default.htm>; Education Victoria, Accountability and Development Division, <www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/a%26d/index.htm>.

39. Great Britain, Office for Standards in Education, *Inspecting Schools: The Framework* (London: the Office, 1999). Also available online at: <www.ofsted.gov.uk/public/index.htm>.

40. Peter Cowley and Shahrokh Shahabi-Azad, "Report Card on Ontario's Secondary Schools: 2001 Edition," Fraser Institute, 2001, <www.fraserinstitute.ca/publications/studies/education/report_card/2001/ont/>.

41. For more information on the kinds of school profiles used by these jurisdictions, visit their websites: Quebec <www.meq.gouv.qc.ca>; California <www.cde.ca.gov>; United Kingdom <www.ofsted.gov.uk>.

42. Education Quality and Accountability Office, "Education Quality Indicators Program (EQUIP): The Framework," n.d., <www.eqao.com/eqao/home_page/pdf_e/01/01P028e.pdf>.

Chapter 5, Organizing Schools to Support Continuous Improvement

43. North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, "Critical Issue: Rethinking the Use of Educational Resources to Support Higher Student Achievement," 2000, <www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/envrnmnt/go/go600.htm>.

44. Ibid.

45. Wilbur Brookover et al., *Creating Effective Schools: An In-service Program for Enhancing School Learning Climate and Achievement* (Holmes Beach, FL: Learning Publications, 1982), 149.

46. National Association of State Boards of Education, "All Time Is Not Equal: Factors to Consider When Implementing Innovative Uses of Time," *Policy Update* 7, no. 2, January 1999, <www.nasbe.org/Policy_Updates/Students/all.pdf>.

47. American Federation of Teachers, *Principles for Professional Development: AFT's Guidelines for Creating Professional Development Programs That Make a Difference* (Washington, DC: the Federation, 1995), 7–8, and available online at: <www.aft.org/edissues/downloads/ppd.pdf>; Dennis Sparks and Stephanie Hirsch, "A National Plan for Improving Professional Development," February 2000, <www.nsdc.org/educatorindex.htm>; Michael Fullan, *The New Meaning of Educational Change*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: Irwin, 2001), 83.

48. North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, "Critical Issue: Rethinking the Use of Educational Resources to Support Higher Student Achievement," op. cit.

49. Ontario, Ministry of Education, "Backgrounder: Task Force on Effective Schools – Terms of Reference," January 22, 2001, <www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/nr/01.01/bg0122.html>.

50. Caroline Sharp, "The Learning Benefits of Restructuring the School Year: What Is the Evidence?" (paper presented at the ATL Conference for London Members, March 25, 2000), 10, <www.nfer.ac.uk/conferences/year.htm>.

51. Allison C. Woodward, "Effects of School Calendars on Student Achievement and Retention" (paper written for PSY 702: Conditions of Learning, Valdosta State University, December 1995), <www.uncg.edu/edu/ericcass/achieve/docs/calendar.htm>.

52. Patricia Gandara and Judy Fish, "Year-Round Schooling as an Avenue to Major Structural Reform," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 16, no. 1 (spring 1994), 67–85.

53. Tyler Weaver, "Year-Round Education," *ERIC Digest (ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management)*, no. 68, 1992. <http://ericir.syr.edu/plweb-cgi/obtain.pl>.

54. The purpose of the proposed research is to determine the relationships between changing to a form of "year-round" calendar and issues of equity and social justice. Canadian researchers, under the leadership of Dr. Carolyn M. Shields, Professor of Educational Studies, University of British Columbia, will study four jurisdictions: Alberta, Ontario, California, and Florida.

Chapter 6, Monitoring Board Performance

55. Ontario, Ministry of Education, "Backgrounder: Task Force on Effective Schools – Terms of Reference," January 22, 2001, <www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/nr/01.01/bg0122.html>.

56. Ibid.

57. H. Pepper Sturm, "Public School Accountability," Background Paper 95-14, Nevada Department of Education, February 1995, <www.leg.state.nv.us/lcb/research/Bkground/95-14.htm>.

58. The California Department of Education's Academic Performance Index has the capacity to compare relevant data. Visit its site at: <www.cde.ca.gov/psaa/api/>.

Select Bibliography

Note: Websites cited below were accessed during the course of the task force's research, between January and June 2001. They may not be accessible after publication of this report, or the information cited may no longer be available at the website address shown. The Task Force on Effective Schools takes no responsibility for the accessibility of the sites listed.

Effective Schools

Bottoms, Gene. *Things That Matter Most in Improving Student Learning: Implications for State Policy and Educational Leadership*. Atlanta: Southern Regional Education Board, 2000. Also available online at: <www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/pubs/mattermost.asp>.

Cotton, Kathleen. "Effective Schooling Practices: A Research Synthesis: 1995 Update." Northwest Regional Education Laboratory. 1995. <www.nwrel.org/scpd/esp/esp95.html>.

Faucher, R. "L'École française en milieu minoritaire : sa spécificité par rapport à son rôle, sa clientèle, ses artisans et ses moyens d'intervention." Document prepared for the Canadian Teachers' Federation. Ottawa: the Federation, 2001.

Fullan, Michael. "Education Reform: Are We on the Right Track?" *Education Canada* 38, no. 3 (fall 1998). Also available online at: <www.acea.ca/educan/edreform.phtml>.

Gaskell, Jane. *Secondary Schools in Canada: The National Report of the Exemplary School Project*. Toronto: Canadian Education Association, 1995.

Glidden, Heidi. "Making Standards Matter 1999." American Federation of Teachers, Educational Issues Dept. <http://aft.org/edissues/standards99/toc.htm>.

Gray, John, D. Hopkins, D. Reynolds, B. Wilcox, S. Farrell, and D. Jesson. *Improving Schools: Performance and Potential*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999.

Harris, Alma. *Teaching and Learning in the Effective School*. Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 1998.

Iberoamerican Network for Research on School Effectiveness and School Improvement. "School Effectiveness." 2001. <www.mec.es/cide/ingles/rieme/eficacia/fundam/index.htm>.

Jacka, Noreen. "What Makes a Good School?" adapted and updated by Margaret Oldfield and Jennifer Jenson. *CERIS Themes (Canadian Education Research Information System)* 2001. <http://ceris.schoolnet.ca/e/goodschool1.html>.

Jones, Rebecca, and Mary Fulton. "What Works" [Researchers Tell What Schools Must Do to Improve Student Achievement]. *American School Board Journal* 185, no. 4 (April 1998), 28–33.

King, A.J.C., and M.J. Peart. *The Good School: Strategies for Making Secondary Schools Effective*. Toronto: Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, 1990.

King, Bruce M., and Fred M. Newmann. "Will Teacher Learning Advance School Goals?" *Phi Delta Kappan* 81, no. 8 (April 2000).

Lezotte, L. "Designing the Effective Learning System." Paper presented at the 18th Annual Effective Schools Conference of the National School Conference Institute, Phoenix, Arizona, March 2001.

Lwin, Thein. "Education Policy and School Effectiveness: A Review of Research on School Effectiveness and Its Implications for Recent Policies on Literacy and Numeracy." May 17, 1999. <www.students.ncl.ac.uk/thein.lwin/edd5.html>.

Mortimore, Peter. "School Effectiveness and the Management of Effective Learning and Teaching." *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* 14, no. 4 (1993), 290–310.

Nagel, Rosemary G., John V. Trott, and Brian T.W. Way. *Blueprint for Excellence: A Design for Effective Schools*. Toronto: Professional Development Committee, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, 1985.

Partenariat des états généraux sur l'éducation élémentaire et secondaire de langue française en Ontario. *L'École franco-ontarienne de la réussite : saisir l'occasion*. Ottawa: Impression Imprimerie, 1997.

Poster, Cyril. *Restructuring: The Key to Effective School Management*. Edited by Sonia Blandford and John Welton. New York: Routledge, 1999.

Pritchett-Johnson, Jeannie, Martha Livingston, and Robert A. Schwartz. "What Makes a Good Elementary School? A Critical Examination." *Journal of Education Research* 93, no. 6 (July/Aug. 2000), 339–48.

Raham, Helen. "Tracking the Trends: Effective Schools Research." *Education Analyst* 4, no. 2, spring 2001. <www.saee.bc.ca/2001_4_2_3.html>.

Reynolds, David. "School Effectiveness and Quality in Education." In *Improving Education: Promoting Quality in Schools*, edited by Peter Ribbins and Elizabeth Burridge, 18-31. London: Cassell, 1994.

Reynolds, David, Robert Bollen, Bert Creemers, David Hopkins, Louise Stoll, and Nijs Lagerweij. *Making Good Schools: Linking School Effectiveness and School Improvement*. Educational Management Series. New York: Routledge, 1996.

Reynolds, David, and Charles Teddlie, with Bert Creemers, Jaap Scheerens, and T. Townsend. "An Introduction to School Effectiveness Research." In *The International Handbook of School Effectiveness Research*, edited by Charles Teddlie and David Reynolds, 135–59. London: Falmer Press, 2000.

Schofield, John. "Saving Our Schools." *Maclean's*. May 14, 2001, 22–28.

Scottish Education Department. HM Inspectors of Schools. *Effective Primary Schools*. Edinburgh: HM Stationery Office, 1989.

———. *Effective Secondary Schools*. Edinburgh: HM Stationery Office, 1988.

Stoll, Louise, and Dean Fink. *Changing Our Schools: Linking School Effectiveness and School Improvement*. Changing Education [series]. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1996.

U.S. Department of Education. "Building School Capacity: Systemic Support for the Process of Change." In *Turning Around Low-Performing Schools: A Guide for State and Local Leaders*. May 1998. <www.ed.gov/pubs/turning/capacity.html>.

Teacher Excellence

American Federation of Teachers. *Principles for Professional Development: AFT's Guidelines for Creating Professional Development Programs That Make a Difference*. Washington, DC: the Federation, 1995. Also available online at: <www.aft.org/edissues/downloads/ppd.pdf>.

———. K–16 Teacher Education Task Force. *Building a Profession: Strengthening Teacher Preparation and Induction*. Washington, DC: the Federation, 2000.

Berliner, D.C. "The Nature of Expertise in Teaching." In *Effective and Responsible Teaching: The New Synthesis*, edited by Fritz K. Oser, Andreas Dick, and Jean-Luc Patry, 227–48. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1992.

Brophy, J., ed. *Advances in Research on Teaching, Vol. 2: Teachers' Knowledge of Subject Matter as It Relates to Their Teaching Practice*. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1991.

Cumming, Jim, and Christine Owen, eds. *Reforming Schools Through Innovative Teaching*. Deakin, Australia: Australian College of Education, 2001.

Darling-Hammond, Linda. *Solving the Dilemmas of Teacher Supply, Demand, and Standards: How We Can Ensure a Competent, Caring, and Qualified Teacher for Every Child*. New York: National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2000.

———. "State Teaching Policies and Student Achievement." Based on a Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy Research (CTP) report entitled "Teacher Quality and Student Achievement: A Review of State Policy Evidence." *High School Educator* 1, no. 1, Nov/Dec. 2000. <www.clhs.net/novdec00.htm>.

Darling-Hammond, Linda, and Deborah Loewenberg Ball. *Teaching for High Standards: What Policymakers Need to Know and Be Able to Do*. Prepared for the National Goals Panel. New York: National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1997. Also available online at: <www.negp.gov/reports/highstds.htm>.

Epp, Walter, and Juanita Ross Epp. "Comparing Teacher Education: Ontario, Canada and Other TIMSS Participants (England, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, United States)." *EQAO Research Series* no. 5, December 2000. Also available online at: <www.eqao.com/eqao/home_page/pdf_e/01/01P005e.pdf>.

Feiman-Nemser, Sharon, Sharon Schwille, Cindy Carver, and Brian Yusko. *A Conceptual Review of Literature on New Teacher Induction*. Lansing, MI: National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching, Michigan State University, 1999. Also available online at: <www.ericsp.org/pages/digests/feiman.pdf>.

Fullan, Michael, G. Galluzzo, P. Morris, and N. Watson. *The Rise and Stall of Teacher Education Reform*. Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1998.

Great Britain. Teacher Training Agency. *National Standards for Qualified Teacher Status*. [London]: the Agency, 1998.

Ingvarson, Lawrence. *Strengthening the Profession? A Comparison of Recent Reforms in the U.K. and the U.S.A.* Quality Teaching Series, no. 4. Deakin, Australia: Australian College of Education, 2001.

Leithwood, Kenneth A., L. Leonard, and L. Sharratt. "Conditions Fostering Organizational Learning in Schools." In *Understanding Schools as Intelligent Systems*. Advances in Research and Theories of School Management and Educational Policy, vol. 4, edited by Kenneth A. Leithwood, 99–124. Stamford, CT: JAI Press, 2000.

Lewis, Laurie, Basmat Parsad, Nancy Carey, Nicole Bartfai, Elizabeth Farris Westat; Becky Smerdon, Pelavin Research Center, American Institutes of Research; Bernie Greene, Project Officer, National Center for Education Statistics. *Teacher Quality: A Report on the Preparation and Qualifications of Public School Teachers*. Statistical Analysis Report, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1999. Also available online at: <www.nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=1999080>.

McCrone, Gavin. *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century*. [Edinburgh]: Committee of Inquiry Into Professional Conditions of Service for Teachers, 2000. Also available online at: <www.mccronecommittee.org.uk/documents/TP21/tp21-00.htm>.

National Association of State Boards of Education. "All Time Is Not Equal: Factors to Consider When Implementing Innovative Uses of Time." *Policy Update* 7, no. 2, January 1999. <www.nasbe.org/Policy_Updates/Students/all.pdf>.

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. *Policy Inventory Framework (Teacher Training and Induction)*. n.d. <http://nctaf.org/resourcestates/policy_inventory2.htm>.

Ramsey, Gregor A. *Quality Matters: Revitalising Teaching: Critical Times, Critical Choices: Report of the Review of Teacher Education, New South Wales*. Sydney: NSW Department of Education, 2000.

Rényi, Judith. "Teachers Take Charge of Their Learning: Transforming Professional Development for Student Success." NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education. 1996. <www.nfie.org/publications/takecharge_exec.htm>.

Shulman, Lee S. "Knowledge and Teaching: Foundations of the New Reform." *Harvard Educational Review* 57, no. 1, February 1987.

Smithers, Alan, and Pamela Robinson. *Attracting Teachers: Past Patterns, Present Policies, Future Prospects*. Liverpool: Carmichael Press, 2000.

———. *Coping with Teacher Shortages*. London: National Union of Teachers, 2000.

Southern Regional Education Board. "Planning and Conducting Professional Development That Makes a Difference: A Guide for School Leaders." n.d. <www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/professionaldev/planandconductprofdev.asp>.

Sparks, Dennis. "What Teachers Should Expect from Staff Development." *Results (National Staff Development Council)*, May 1999, 2. Also available online at: <www.nsdc.org/library/results/res5-99sparks.html>.

Sparks, Dennis, and Stephanie Hirsh. "A National Plan for Improving Professional Development." February 2000. National Staff Development Council. <www.nsdc.org/library/results/res2-00spar.html>.

Stevenson, Harold W., and Roberta Nerison-Low. "The Training and Daily Lives of Teachers." Chap. 5 of *To Sum It Up: Case Studies of Education in Germany, Japan, and the United States*. <www.ed.gov/pubs/SumItUp/chapter5.html>.

Stiggins, Richard J. "Teams." *Journal of Staff Development* 20, no. 3, summer 1999. <www.nsdc.org/library/jsd/stiggins203.html>.

Stoll, Louise. "Evaluating Induction Programs: Do They Work?" Orbit 22, no. 1, February 1991.

School Leadership

Caldwell, Brian J. *Strategic Leadership, Resource Management and Effective School Reform*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, California, April 1998.

Collarbone, Patricia. "Growing Leaders: The National Agenda for Developing Leadership." Address to the North England Conference of the London Leadership Centre, January 2000. <www.ioe.ac.uk/llc/Leaders.htm>.

Fullan, Michael. *What's Worth Fighting for in the Principalship? Strategies for Taking Charge in the School Principalship*. 2nd ed. Toronto: Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation, 1997.

Great Britain. HM Inspectors of Schools. "Improving Leadership in Scottish Schools." 2000–2001. <www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/education/ilss.pdf>.

Hallinger, Philip, and Ronald H. Heck. "Exploring the Principal's Contribution to School Effectiveness: 1980–1995." *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* 9, no. 2 (June 1998), 157–91.

Leithwood, Kenneth A. "School Leadership in the Context of Accountability Policies." Submitted for publication to the *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 2000.

Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation. Educational Services Committee. *Leading and Learning: Leadership for Changing Times*. Toronto: the Committee, 1997.

Slezak, James. "The Effective Principal." In his *Odyssey to Excellence: How to Build Effective Schools Through Leadership and Management Skills*. San Francisco: Merritt, 1984.

Smithers, Alan, and Pamela Robinson. *Talking Heads*. London: National Union of Teachers, 2000.

Usdan, Michael, Barbara McCloud, and Mary Podmostko. *Leadership for Student Learning: Reinventing the Principalship*. Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership, 2000. Also available online at: <www.iel.org/principal.pdf>.

Monitoring School and Board Performance

Center for Education Reform. "School Report Cards State by State Around the Nation." [2000] <www.edreform.com/education_reform_resources/school_report_cards.htm>.

Cowley, Peter, and Shahrokh Shahabi-Azad. "Report Card on Ontario's Secondary Schools: 2001 Edition." Fraser Institute, 2001. <www.fraserinstitute.ca/publications/studies/education/report_card/2001/ont/>.

Education Week on the Web. "The Indicators: How We Measured the Quality of Education in the States." 1997. <www.edweek.org/sreports/qc97/indicators/indicat.htm>.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. "Data-Driven School Improvement." *ERIC Digest*, no. 109, 1997. <www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed401595.html>.

Great Britain. Office for Standards in Education. *Primary Schools at a Glance*. London: HM Stationery Office, 2001.

———. *Secondary Schools at a Glance*. London: HM Stationery Office, 2001.

———. *Standards and Quality in Education, 1999/2000: The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools*. London: HM Stationery Office, 2001.

Great Britain. Scottish Office. Inspectors of Schools. Audit Unit. *Standards and Quality in Scottish Schools, 1995 to 1998*. Edinburgh: HM Stationery Office, 1999.

Maennling, M. *Survey of Educational Indicators I: National Center on Educational Outcomes*. Technical Report, no. 97-01. Montreal: Office of Research on Educational Policy, McGill University, 1997.

Maennling, M., R. Peera, and Carolyn Sturge Sparkes. *Survey of Educational Indicators II: Presence and Participation, Academic Achievement, Social and Personal Learning, and Vocational Learning*. Technical Report, no. 97-02. Montreal: Office of Research on Educational Policy, McGill University, 1997.

Ontario. Education Quality and Accountability Office. "Education Quality Indicators Program (EQUIP): The Framework." n.d. <www.eqao.com/eqao/home_page/pdf_e/01/01P028e.pdf>.

Schlechty, Phillip C. *Inventing Better Schools: An Action Plan for Educational Reform*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997.

Scotland. Scottish Executive. *Raising Standards – Setting Targets: Setting Targets in Scottish Schools: National and Education Authority Information, 1999*. [Edinburgh]: Scottish Executive, 1999. Also available online at: <www.scotland.gov.uk/library2/doc08/stss-00.htm>.

Society for the Advancement of Excellence in Education. "From the Field: Australia: Monitoring School Progress." Education Analyst 2, no. 2, spring 1999. <www.saee.bc.ca/art4_6.html>.

Sparkes, Carolyn Sturge. *Survey of Educational Indicators III: Schools Speak for Themselves*. Technical Report, no. 97-03. Montreal: Office of Research on Educational Policy, McGill University, 1997.

Capacity Building and School Improvement

Bull, Barry L., and Mark Buechler. *Learning Together: Professional Development for Better Schools*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana Education Policy Center, 1996.

Canadian Educational Policy and Administration Network. "School Improvement." [list of resources]. n.d. <www.cepan.ca/rrnew/sp/school_improvement.htm>.

Earl, Lorna M., and Linda E. Lee. *Evaluation of the Manitoba School Improvement Program*. Winnipeg: Manitoba School Improvement Program, 1998. Also available online at: <http://improveschools.web.net/tempeval.pdf>.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. "Magnet Schools." *ERIC Digest*, no. EA 26, 1988. <www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed293225.html>.

Great Britain. Department for Education and Employment. "Beacon Schools in the U.K." n.d. <www.dfee.gov.uk/beacon/>.

———. *Schools: Building on Success: Raising Standards, Promoting Diversity, Achieving Results*. Norwich, England: the Department, 2001.

Great Britain. Scottish Office. Inspectors of Schools. Audit Unit. *The Role of School Development Plans in Managing School Effectiveness*. 2nd ed. Management of Educational Resources, no. 5. Edinburgh: Scottish Office, 1994.

Massell, Diane. "State Strategies for Building Local Capacity: Addressing the Needs of Standards-Based Reform." *CPRE Policy Briefs (Consortium for Policy Research in Education)* RB-25-July 1998. <www.navpoint.com/cgim/cpre.cgi?page=pubs>.

Ontario. Education Improvement Commission. *School Improvement Planning: A Handbook for Principals, Teachers, and School Councils*. Toronto: the Commission, 2000.

Reeves, Douglas B. "Standards Are Not Enough: Essential Transformation for Successful Schools." Paper presented at the 18th Annual Effective Schools Conference of the National School Conference Institute, Phoenix, Arizona, March 2001.

U.S. Department of Education. "Blue Ribbon Schools: Program Information." <www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/BlueRibbonSchools/about.html>.

Victoria. Department of Education. *Quality Assurance in Victorian Schools: Developing a School Charter*. Melbourne, Vic.: Community Information Service, Dept. of Education, 1997.

School Self-Evaluation

British Columbia. Ministry of Education. "B.C. Public School Accreditation Program: A Manual for Schools." 2000. <www.bced.gov.bc.ca/accreditation/manual>.

Great Britain. Office for Standards in Education. "Helping Schools to Carry Out Self-Evaluation: Introduction and Guide: A Training Course for School Managers." n.d. <www.ofsted.gov.uk/public/docs00/schseleval.pdf>.

Great Britain. Scottish Office. Inspectors of Schools. Audit Unit. *How Good Is Our School? Self-Evaluation Using Performance Indicators*. Edinburgh: Scottish Office, 1996.

———. *A Route to Equality and Fairness: Self-Evaluation Using Performance Indicators*. Edinburgh: Scottish Office, 1999.

McBeath, John. *Schools Must Speak for Themselves: The Case for School Self-Evaluation*. London: Routledge, 1999.

Rhode Island. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. "SALT: School Accountability for Learning and Teaching [program]." <www.ridoe.net/schoolimprove/salt/default.htm>.

Scotland. HM Inspectorate of Education. "General Publications – Self-Evaluation and Management." <www.scotland.gov.uk/hmie/selfevalpubs.htm>.

Texas Education Agency. Department of Accountability and School Accreditation. "Accreditation District Self-Evaluation Document 2000–2001." Revised August 23, 2000. <www.tea.state.tx.us/account.eval/selfdista0001.doc>.

Victoria. Department of Education. Office of Review. *Triennial School Review: Guidelines for School Self-Assessment*. Melbourne, Vic.: Community Information Service, Dept. of Education, 1997.

Independent Reviews of Schools and Boards

British Columbia. Ministry of Education. "B.C. Public School Accreditation Program: A Manual for Schools." 2000. <www.bced.gov.bc.ca/accreditation/manual/>.

Gelberg, S.N. Correspondence received by the Task Force on Effective Schools on the Canadian Educational Standards Institute's School Evaluation Model, 2001.

Great Britain. Office for Standards in Education. *Inspecting Schools: The Framework*. London: the Office, 1999. Also available online at: <www.ofsted.gov.uk/public/index.htm>.

———. *LEA Support for School Improvement: Framework for the Inspection of Local Education Authorities: Effective from 1 September 2000*. London: the Office, 2000. Also available online at: <www.ofsted.gov.uk/public/index.htm>.

National Council on Teacher Quality. Teacher Quality Clearinghouse. "Holding Schools Accountable." [2000] <www.tqclearinghouse.org/issues/school.html>.

Ontario. Ministry of Education. Regional Services Division. *Co-operative Evaluation and Development of School Systems: A Manual for Implementation*. Toronto: the Ministry, 1983.

Southeastern Regional Vision for Education. *Using Accountability as a Lever for Changing the Culture of Schools: Examining District Strategies*. [Greensboro, NC]: SERVE, 1997.

Texas Education Agency. Department of Accountability and School Accreditation. *Accountability Procedures Manual for On-site Evaluations, 2000–2001*. [2000] <www.tea.state.tx.us/account.eval/apm0001.doc>.

Victoria. Department of Education. Office of Review. *School Review: Guidelines for Independent Verification of School Self-Assessments*. Melbourne, Vic.: Community Information Service, Dept. of Education, 1997.

School Organization

Adelman, Nancy E., M. Bruce Haslem, and Beverly A. Pringle. "The Uses of Time for Teaching and Learning." Studies of Education Reform. Commissioned by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Dept. of Education. October 1996. <www.ed.gov/pubs/SER/UsesofTime/>.

Alberta Teachers' Association. "Class Size [Special feature]." *ATA News* 35, no. 8 (November 21, 2000).

Brookover, Wilbur, et al. *Creating Effective Schools: An In-service Program for Enhancing School Learning Climate and Achievement*. Holmes Beach, FL: Learning Publications, 1982.

Canady, Robert Lynn. "The Power of Innovative Scheduling." *Educational Leadership* 53, no. 3, November 1995. <www.ascd.org/readingroom/edlead/9511/canady.html>.

Cohen, Gillian, Christine Miller, and Robert Stonehill. *The Class-Size Reduction Program: Boosting Student Achievement in Schools Across the Nation: A First-Year Report*. Prepared for the U.S. Dept. of Education. Jessup, MD: ED Pubs, 2000.

Cotton, Kathleen. "School Size, School Climate, and Student Performance." *School Improvement Research Series*, Close-Up no. 20. <www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/10/c020.html>.

Fowler, William J. Jr., and Herbert J. Walberg. "School Size, Characteristics, and Outcomes." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 13, no. 2 (summer 1991), 189–202.

Gandara, Patricia, and Judy Fish. "Year-Round Schooling as an Avenue to Major Structural Reform." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 16, no. 1 (spring 1994), 67–85.

Guskey, Thomas R. "Apply Time With Wisdom." *Journal of Staff Development* 20, no. 2, spring 1999. <www.nsdc.org/library/jsd/guskey202.html>.

Hadderman, Margaret. "School Productivity." *ERIC Digest*, no. 119, 1998. <www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed420092.html>.

Hopkins, Gary. "The Debate Over Class Size, Part 2: The Critics Have Their Say." *School Issues (Education World)*. February 23, 1998. <www.education-world.com/a_issues/issues025.shtml>.

Krueger, Alan B., and Eric A. Hanushek. "The Class Size Policy Debate." *Working Papers (Economic Policy Institute)*, no. 121, October 2000. <www.epinet.org/Workingpapers/class_size.html>.

Lee, Valerie E., and Julia B. Smith. "High School Restructuring and Student Achievement: A New Study Finds Strong Links [Issue report]." *Issues in Restructuring Schools* 7 (fall 1994).

———. "High School Size: Which Works Best and for Whom?" *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 19, no. 3 (fall 1997), 205–27.

Lee, Valerie E., Becky A. Smerdon, and Corinne Alfeld-Liro. "Inside Large and Small High Schools: Curriculum and Social Relations." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 22, no. 2 (summer 2000), 147–71.

Lee, Valerie E., Julia B. Smith, and Robert G. Croninger. "Restructuring High Schools Can Improve Student Achievement." *WCER Highlights (Wisconsin Center for Education Research)* 8, no. 1, spring 1996. <www.wcer.wisc.edu/Publications>.

Maryland State Board of Education. "Appendix E: School Organization." In *Every Child Achieving: A Plan for Meeting the Needs of the Individual Learner: Maryland's PreK–12 Academic Intervention Initiative*. October 27, 1999. <http://mdk12.org/practices/ensure/initiative>.

McAdie, Pat. *Class Size Makes a Difference: Research Report, August 2000*. Toronto: Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, 2000. Also available online at: <www.etfo.on.ca/media/med.html>.

National Association of State Boards of Education. "All Time Is Not Equal: Factors to Consider When Implementing Innovative Uses of Time." *Policy Update* 7, no. 2, January 1999. <www.nasbe.org/Policy_Updates/Students/all.pdf>.

———. "Class Size." *Policy Update* 5, no. 12 (June 1997).

———. "School Size." *Policy Update* 7, no. 17 (December 1999).

National Education Commission on Time and Learning. "Prisoners of Time: Report of the National Education Commission on Time and Learning." April 1994. <www.ed.gov/pubs/PrisonersOfTime/>.

New Zealand. Education Review Office. "Open for Instruction." February 1998. <www.ero.govt.nz/Publications/eers1998/open/open.htm>.

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. "Critical Issue: Rethinking the Use of Educational Resources to Support Higher Student Achievement." 2000. <www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/envrnmnt/go/go600.htm>.

Nye, Barbara, Larry V. Hedges, and Spyros Konstantopoulos. "The Effects of Small Classes on Academic Achievement: The Results of the Tennessee Class Size Experiment." *American Educational Research Journal* 37, no. 1 (spring 2000), 123–51.

Pate-Bain, H., B. DeWayne Fulton, and J. Boyd-Zaharias. *Effects of Class-Size Reduction in the Early Grades (K–3) on High School Performance: Preliminary Results (1999) from Project STAR, Tennessee's Longitudinal Class-Size Study*. N.p.: HEROS Inc., 1999.

Rusk, Bruce, Jean Shaw, and Peter Joong. *The Full Service School*. Toronto: Educational Services Committee, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, 1994.

Sharp, Caroline. "The Learning Benefits of Restructuring the School Year: What Is the Evidence?" Paper presented at the ATL Conference for London Members, March 25, 2000. <www.nfer.ac.uk/conferences/year.htm>.

Weaver, Tyler. "Year-Round Education." *ERIC Digest (ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management)*, no. 68, 1992. <http://ericir.syr.edu/plweb-cgi/obtain.pl>.

Witherell, Carol S. "Smaller Schools and Classrooms: The Evidence Is In." Oregon School Boards Association. 2001. <www.osba.org/hotopics/classize/evidence.htm>.

Woodward, Allison C. "Effects of School Calendars on Student Achievement and Retention." Paper written for PSY 702: Conditions of Learning, Valdosta State University, December 1995. <www.uncg.edu/edu/ericcass/achieve/docs/calendar.htm>.

Ziegler, Suzanne. "The Impact of Class Size, Length of School Year, and Teacher Qualifications on Student Achievement: What Research Says About Costs and Benefits." *CERIS Themes (Canadian Education Research Information System)*. n.d. <http://ceris.schoolnet.ca/e/CostBen1.html>.

Accountability

EdSource. "National Accountability Movement Offers Lessons for California." May 2000. <www.edsource.org/nat_acc_mov.html>.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. "Accountability." *Research Roundup* 16, 1, fall 1999. <http://eric.uoregon.edu/publications/roundup/F99.html>.

Gemberling, Katheryn W., Carl W. Smith, and Joseph S. Villani. *The Key Work of School Boards Guidebook*. Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association, 2000. Also available online at: <www.nsba.org/keywork/guidebook.htm>.

Nathan, Joe, and Nicola Johnson. *What Should We Do? A Practical Guide to Assessment and Accountability in Schools*. Minneapolis: Center for School Change, University of Minnesota, 2000. Also available online at: <www.hhh.umn.edu/centers/school-change/abhome.htm>.

Ontario. Education Improvement Commission. *The Road Ahead – IV: A Report on Improving Schools Through Greater Accountability*. Toronto: the Commission, 2000.

———. *The Road Ahead – V: A Report on Improving Student Achievement*. Toronto: the Commission, 2000.

Panasonic Foundation, in collaboration with the American Association of School Administrators. "Shared Accountability: Shifting From Heavy-Handed to Helping Hands." *Strategies for School System Leaders on District-Level Change* 7, no. 1, May 2000. Also available online at: <www.aasa.org/issues_and_insights/technology/May2000_Strategies.pdf.>

Sturm, H. Pepper. "Public School Accountability." Background Paper 95-14, Nevada Department of Education, February 1995. <www.leg.state.nv.us/lcb/research/Bkground/95-14.htm>.

General References

Alexander, Robin J. *Policy and Practice in Primary Education*. London: Routledge, 1992.

Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes. Presentation to the Task Force on Effective Schools. Toronto: the Association, 2001.

Fullan, Michael. *Change Forces: The Sequel*. Educational Change and Development Series. Philadelphia: Falmer Press, 1999.

Fullan, Michael. *The New Meaning of Educational Change*. 3rd ed. Toronto: Irwin, 2001.

Hargreaves, Andy, and Michael Fullan. *What's Worth Fighting for Out There?* Toronto: Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation, 1998.

Livingstone, D.W., D.J. Hart, and L.E. Davie, eds. *Public Attitudes Towards Education in Ontario 2001: The 13th OISE/UT Survey*. Orbit Monograph. Toronto: OISE/UT Press, 2001.

Ontario. Ministry of Education. "Backgrounder: Task Force on Effective Schools – Terms of Reference." January 22, 2001. <www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/nr/01.01/bg0122.html>.

———. *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Language*. Toronto: Ministry of Education, 1997. Also available online at: <www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/curr97l.html>.

Ontario. Premier's Office. "Harris Launches Task Force on Effective Schools." January 22, 2001. <www.premier.gov.on.ca/english/news/Taskforce012201.htm>.

Ontario Catholic Schools Trustees' Association. "Task Force on Effective Schools: A Catholic Response." Toronto: the Association, 2001.

Shapiro, Bernard J. *The Report of the Commission on Private Schools in Ontario*. Toronto: the Commission, 1985.

Jurisdictional Examples

For a full list of departments and ministries of education in Canada:
<www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/relsites/oth_prov.html>.

For a full list of departments of education in the United States:
<www.ed.gov/Programs/bastmp/SEA.htm>.

For education links in England and Wales:
<www.dfee.gov.uk/> and <www.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

For education links in Scotland:
<www.scotland.gov.uk/whatwedo.asp>.

For education links in Australia:
<www.deet.gov.au/index1.htm> and <www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/>.

For education links in New Zealand:
<www.minedu.govt.nz/>.

For education links in the Netherlands:
<www.minocw.nl/english/index.html>.

Sample School Report Cards

Two sample school report cards follow: one for an English-language Catholic elementary school and one for an English-language secondary school.

Note that the French-language version of this report contains a sample report card for a French-language elementary school and a French-language Catholic secondary school.

Elementary School Report Card 2000–200

Province of Ontario

Name of School: St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Catholic Elementary School

Name of Board: Ottawa Valley Catholic District School Board

About Our School

Nestled in a small town in the Ottawa Valley, St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Catholic Elementary School (JK-8) was officially blessed and opened in September 1992. A modern, fully equipped facility, our school includes a chapel, library, gymnasium, and multi-purpose area for community use. A large playground and modern playground equipment are well used. We are located on property adjacent to the parish church, which hosts school liturgies and celebrations. The town's recreation centre and library are situated near the school.

St. Marguerite Bourgeoys serves 230 students from 130 families resident in the town and the surrounding rural area. The vast majority of our students are Canadian-born with English as a first language.

Our school foyer is a welcoming environment with a prayer area in which the central focus is a wood carving of our patron, St. Marguerite Bourgeoys.

School Address:

Tel:
Fax:
E-mail:

Principal:

Vice-Principal:

Chaplain:

Admin. Office Staff:

Chair, Catholic School Council:

Parish Name:

Address:

Tel:

Pastor:

Chair, Parish Council:

Trustee:

Superintendent:

Director of Education:

Board/School Mission Statement

Called to pass on the Good News of Jesus, our Catholic schools provide quality education in the Catholic tradition within the context of a Catholic learning community. The teachings of Jesus Christ are integrated into the curriculum and daily life of the school community. Our mission is to bring students into a living relationship with Jesus in order to invite a personal commitment to a way of life marked by an integration of faith and daily living.

While committed to academic excellence, the approach of our Catholic schools is to tend to all aspects of the students' growth—intellectual, moral, physical, psychological, social, and spiritual.

About Our Students

Number	230
Grade Distribution	JK–Gr. 8
Gender	118 M 112 F
Primary Language Other Than English	8% 19 students
Years in Canada	96% of students born in Canada; 4% arrived in Canada in last 5 years
Special Education Assistance	Identified special needs students – 5%

Our Programs and Services

St. Marguerite Bourgeoys School provides quality education from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8. We teach the complete elementary curriculum as approved by the Ministry of Education and enhanced by the Catholic Curriculum Co-operatives. At the core of our curriculum delivery are the Religious Education and Family Life Education programs approved by the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops. We strive for the integration and infusion of Gospel Values throughout the entire curriculum. We value and offer a full range of co-curricular activities, including sports, drama club, school choir, and environmental projects such as "Adopt a Road." Our students are fully involved in the annual school play, Spirit Week, Open House, and Catholic Education Week activities.

A **special services team model** allows us access to the services of a social worker, psychologist, speech and language therapist, child/youth worker, and public health personnel.

Students also benefit from an excellent chaplaincy program and guidance counselling related to secondary school choices. Special needs students are fully integrated and receive appropriate additional support, as do students requiring remedial help. We have developed many community partnerships that involve our students. A new computer program introduces them to the benefits of technology in education.

Our Commitments *(Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations)*

Our Catholic learning community is committed to forming:

- **A discerning believer** in the Catholic faith community who celebrates the signs and sacred mystery of God's presence through work, sacrament, prayer, forgiveness, reflection, and moral living
- **An effective communicator** who speaks, writes, and listens honestly and sensitively, responding critically in light of Gospel Values
- **A reflective, creative, and holistic thinker** who solves problems and makes responsible decisions with an informed moral conscience for the common good
- **A self-directed, responsible, lifelong learner** who develops and demonstrates his or her God-given potential
- **A collaborative contributor** who finds meaning, dignity, and vocation in work that respects the rights of all and who contributes to the common good
- **A caring family member** who attends to family, school, parish, and the wider community
- **A responsible citizen** who gives witness to Catholic social teaching by promoting peace, justice, and the sacredness of human life

We are committed to providing faith-based education in a vibrant Catholic learning culture, and to a spirit of genuine hospitality marked by inclusion, where all feel welcome and have an authentic sense of belonging.

Our Improvement Plan Highlights

To continue consultation sessions with parents, staff, and community members about our school improvement plan.

To review reports of students who completed the Grades 3 and 6 assessments in order to identify strengths and weaknesses and to plan programming accordingly for the coming year.

To improve our Mathematics levels in Grades 4, 5, and 6 with a goal to having a higher achievement level in Mathematics compared to the board average by June 2003.

To introduce new Mathematics texts in Grades 7 and 8 and purchase Mathematics manipulative materials for the primary division.

To implement the revised Religious Education programs in Grades 3 and 6.

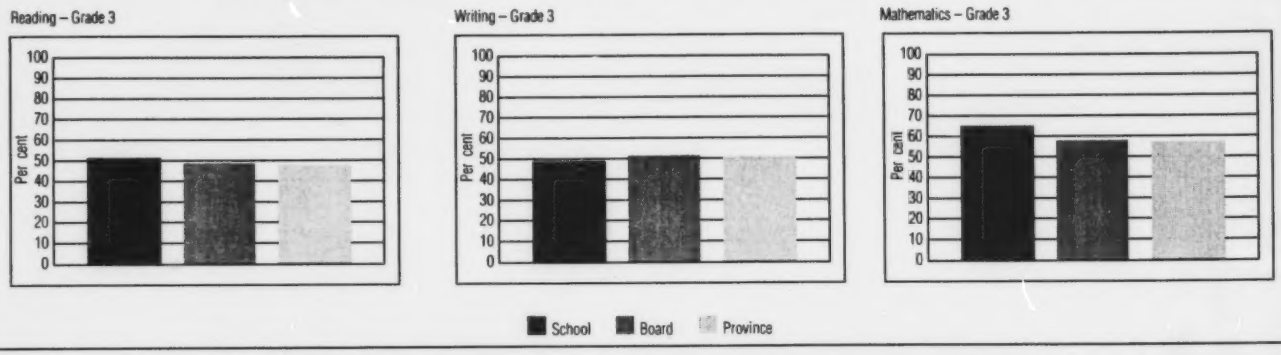
To search for new community partnerships that will enhance the educational experience of our students.

To foster discipleship and civic responsibility through outreach projects at the senior citizens' residence and the local food bank.

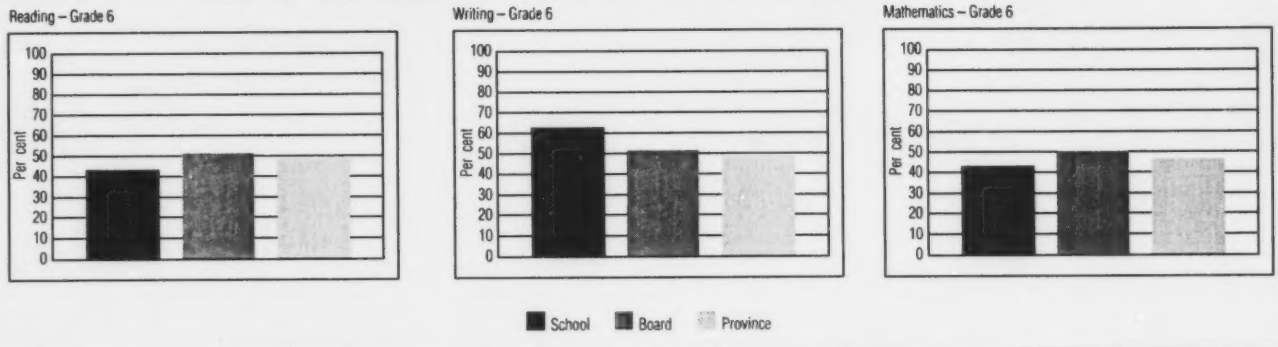
To provide a Careers Day for senior students that will also explore the possibilities of religious vocations.

Our Results 1999–2000

Grade 3 EQAO Assessments: Percentage of Students Achieving Level 3 or Level 4



Grade 6 EQAO Assessments: Percentage of Students Achieving Level 3 or Level 4

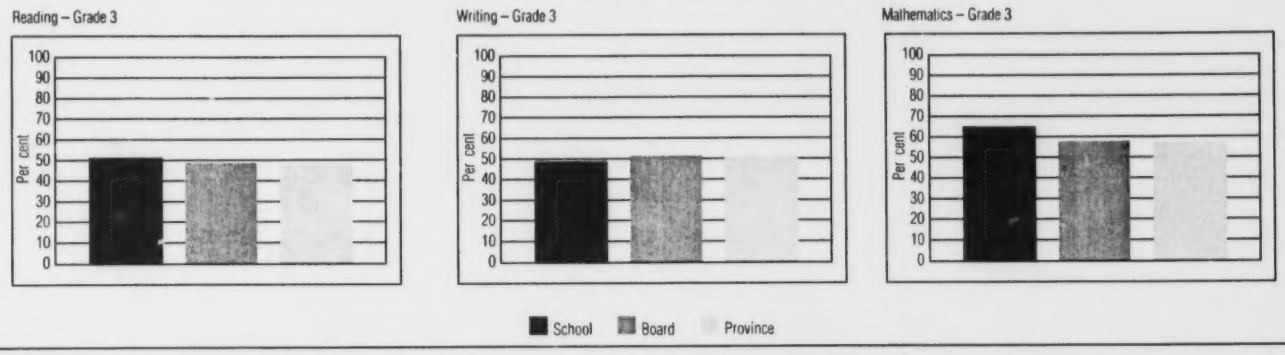


EQAO Student Attitude Survey Results

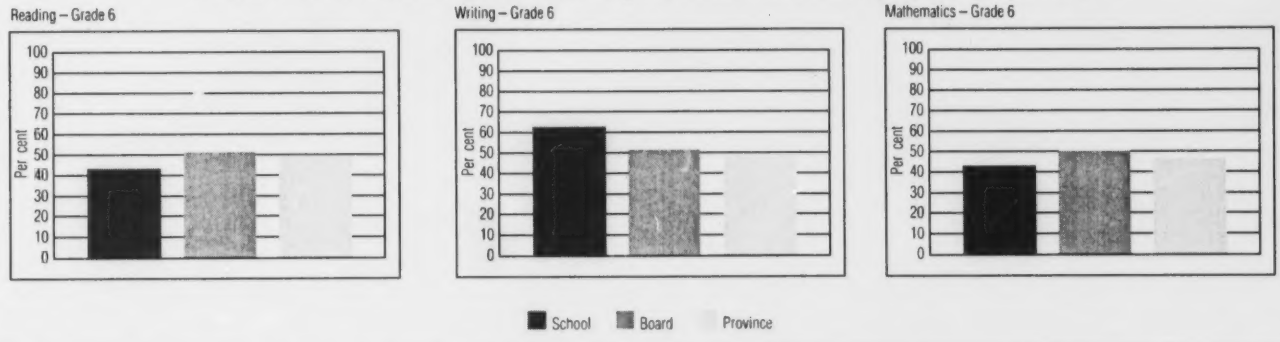
1999–2000		Grade 3			Grade 6		
		School	Board	Ontario	School	Board	Ontario
Student Information							
Total number of students enrolled		27	4,500	139,784	30	4,300	135,509
% receiving ESL support		6%	9%	4%	3%	8%	3%
% receiving special education support		4%	16%	16%	6%	17%	16%
Student Attitudes							
I like to read.	*Girls*	85%	84%	83%	88%	75%	72%
	Boys	84%	74%	70%	60%	60%	56%
I am a good reader.	*Girls*	62%	62%	66%	85%	63%	66%
	Boys	68%	60%	61%	72%	58%	59%
I like to write.	*Girls*	74%	74%	73%	65%	61%	59%
	Boys	53%	62%	59%	48%	48%	43%
I am a good writer.	*Girls*	74%	55%	60%	77%	48%	50%
	Boys	47%	49%	51%	56%	43%	43%
I like mathematics.	*Girls*	56%	64%	60%	42%	49%	43%
	Boys	53%	72%	68%	44%	65%	59%
I am good at mathematics.	*Girls*	50%	45%	45%	42%	42%	40%
	Boys	68%	61%	61%	76%	61%	59%

Our Results 1999–2000

Grade 3 EQAO Assessments: Percentage of Students Achieving Level 3 or Level 4

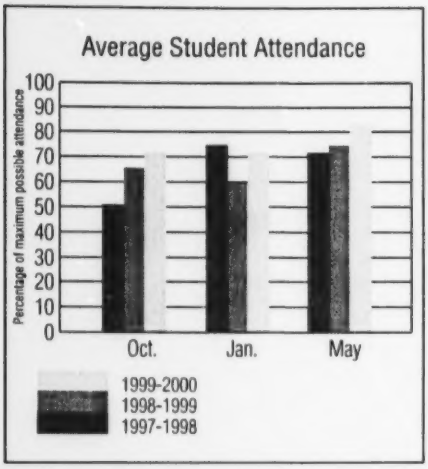


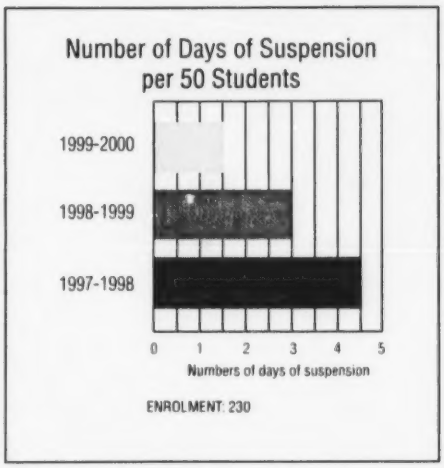
Grade 6 EQAO Assessments: Percentage of Students Achieving Level 3 or Level 4

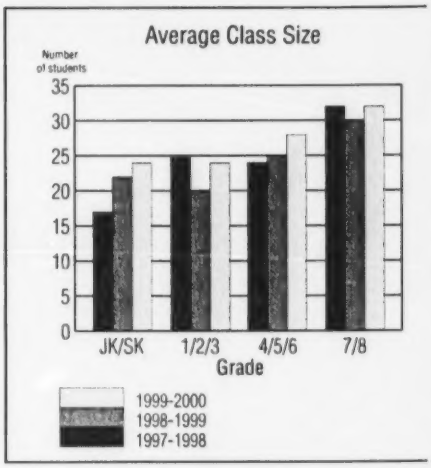


EQAO Student Attitude Survey Results

1999–2000		Grade 3 School	Grade 3 Board	Grade 3 Ontario	Grade 6 School	Grade 6 Board	Grade 6 Ontario
Student Information							
Total number of students enrolled		27	4,500	139,784	30	4,300	135,509
% receiving ESL support		6%	9%	4%	3%	8%	3%
% receiving special education support		4%	16%	16%	6%	17%	16%
Student Attitudes							
I like to read.	*Girls*	85%	84%	83%	88%	75%	72%
	Boys	84%	74%	70%	60%	60%	56%
I am a good reader.	*Girls*	62%	62%	66%	85%	63%	66%
	Boys	68%	60%	61%	72%	58%	59%
I like to write.	*Girls*	74%	74%	73%	65%	61%	59%
	Boys	53%	62%	59%	48%	48%	43%
I am a good writer.	*Girls*	74%	55%	60%	77%	48%	50%
	Boys	47%	49%	51%	56%	43%	43%
I like mathematics.	*Girls*	56%	64%	60%	42%	49%	43%
	Boys	53%	72%	68%	44%	65%	59%
I am good at mathematics.	*Girls*	50%	45%	45%	42%	42%	40%
	Boys	68%	61%	61%	76%	61%	59%







School Safety

Our school has an effective Safe Arrival Program (SAP), Racing Against Drugs (RAD) for Grade 5 students, and Friends and Neighbours Club for junior grades. Our school has implemented an effective Peer Mediation and Conflict Resolution program. We also have Police Assisted Curriculum Education (PACE) in partnership with the OPP, who provide resource kits and speakers on a variety of topics.

What Our Students Think About Our School

School is a place where: (% who agree)	Our School	Board Average
I like to be.	80	75
I feel good about my work.	76	69
I feel proud to be a student.	76	72
I can get along with most other students.	82	74
I find my work interesting.	55	60
I feel important.	75	74
Teachers treat me fairly.	89	84
Teachers take an interest in me and are available for extra help.	72	75
There are lots of opportunities for clubs, sports or other activities.	67	68
I learn about Jesus and His Good News.	73	81

What Our Parents* Think About Our School

This school is a place where: (% who agree)	Our School	Board Average
I am kept informed about my child's progress in all areas.	71	83
I am well informed about events at the school, including prayer and sacrament celebrations.	88	90
I can easily contact staff when necessary.	72	73
An excellent faith-based education is provided.	75	85
There are high expectations for student performance.	81	71
Parents are welcome.	70	75
Student growth and achievement is celebrated.	75	78
There is a noticeable Catholic distinctiveness.	81	85

* The word "parent" is intended to include all of the main caregivers of our students.

Our School and Its Community

St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Catholic Elementary School plays an important role in our local community. Currently running at 100% capacity, our school facilities are scheduled for activities most weeknights and weekends. Many community groups enjoy the use of our facilities. An excellent relationship with our local parish community is evidenced in many joint outreach efforts and celebrations. The Regional Police Community Services cooperates in several of our educational programs.

A collaborative working relationship with the town's recreation centre and library enhances the quality of life for our students.

Community partnerships with both Catholic and municipal agencies allow us to benefit from a multi-disciplinary approach to child welfare.

Involvement in our local regional hospital, senior citizens' residence, and community food bank allow our students to contribute to the common good in visible ways.

Our Staff

	Number	Full Time Equivalent	Ratio of Students – School	Ratio of Students – Board
Principal	1	1	1 : 230	1 : 275
Teachers	12	10.5	1 : 22	1 : 20
Education Assistants	2	2	1 : 115	1 : 175
Support Staff	4	3.5	1 : 66	1 : 120

Number of teachers assigned to grades or subjects that are not recorded on the teacher's Certificate of Qualification 2

How Much It Costs to Run Our School [1] 1999–2000 School Year

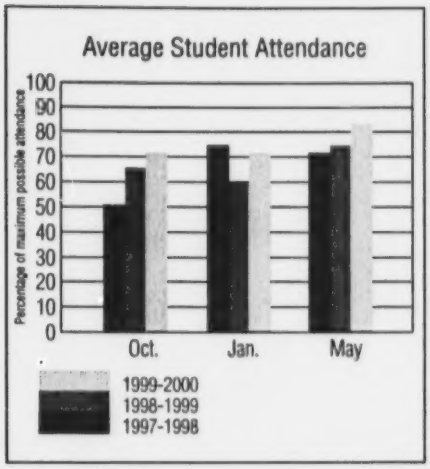
Classroom Costs*	$1,150,000	
Special Education Classroom Costs	$75,000	
Classroom Support	$45,200	
Custodial Services and Utilities	$115,000	
Transportation	$40,000	
Total	$1,425,200	**Board Average**
Per Student	$6,196	$6,235.00

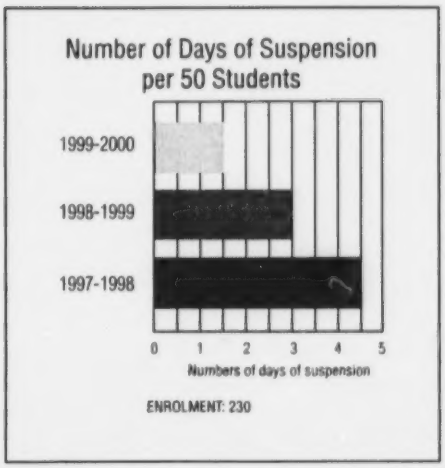
Regular Day-School Enrolment

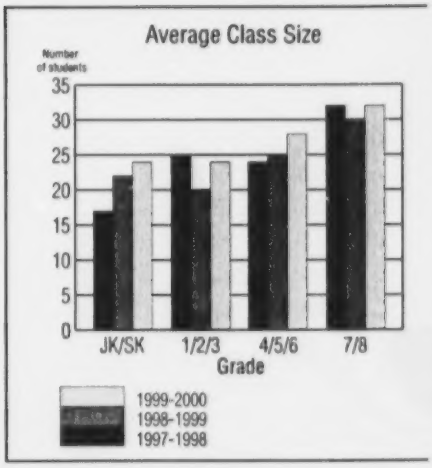
230

[1] The board also has central administrative costs, which are 3 % of the total board budget. This is $ 186.00 per student.

* Includes principal







School Safety

Our school has an effective Safe Arrival Program (SAP), Racing Against Drugs (RAD) for Grade 5 students, and Friends and Neighbours Club for junior grades. Our school has implemented an effective Peer Mediation and Conflict Resolution program. We also have Police Assisted Curriculum Education (PACE) in partnership with the OPP, who provide resource kits and speakers on a variety of topics.

What Our Students Think About Our School

School is a place where: (% who agree)	Our School	Board Average
I like to be.	80	75
I feel good about my work.	76	69
I feel proud to be a student.	76	72
I can get along with most other students.	82	74
I find my work interesting.	55	60
I feel important.	75	74
Teachers treat me fairly.	89	84
Teachers take an interest in me and are available for extra help.	72	75
There are lots of opportunities for clubs, sports or other activities.	67	68
I learn about Jesus and His Good News.	73	81

What Our Parents* Think About Our School

This school is a place where: (% who agree)	Our School	Board Average
I am kept informed about my child's progress in all areas.	71	83
I am well informed about events at the school, including prayer and sacrament celebrations.	88	90
I can easily contact staff when necessary.	72	73
An excellent faith-based education is provided.	75	85
There are high expectations for student performance.	81	71
Parents are welcome.	70	75
Student growth and achievement is celebrated.	75	78
There is a noticeable Catholic distinctiveness.	81	85

* The word "parent" is intended to include all of the main caregivers of our students.

Our School and Its Community

St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Catholic Elementary School plays an important role in our local community. Currently running at 100% capacity, our school facilities are scheduled for activities most weeknights and weekends. Many community groups enjoy the use of our facilities. An excellent relationship with our local parish community is evidenced in many joint outreach efforts and celebrations. The Regional Police Community Services cooperates in several of our educational programs.

A collaborative working relationship with the town's recreation centre and library enhances the quality of life for our students.

Community partnerships with both Catholic and municipal agencies allow us to benefit from a multi-disciplinary approach to child welfare.

Involvement in our local regional hospital, senior citizens' residence, and community food bank allow our students to contribute to the common good in visible ways.

Our Staff

	Number	Full Time Equivalent	Ratio of Students – School	Ratio of Students – Board
Principal	1	1	1 : 230	1 : 275
Teachers	12	10.5	1 : 22	1 : 20
Education Assistants	2	2	1 : 115	1 : 175
Support Staff	4	3.5	1 : 66	1 : 120

Number of teachers assigned to grades or subjects that are not recorded on the teacher's Certificate of Qualification 2

How Much It Costs to Run Our School [1]

1999–2000 School Year

Classroom Costs*	$1,150,000	
Special Education Classroom Costs	$75,000	
Classroom Support	$45,200	
Custodial Services and Utilities	$115,000	
Transportation	$40,000	
Total	$1,425,200	**Board Average**
Per Student	$6,196	$6,235.00

Regular Day-School Enrolment

230

[1] The board also has central administrative costs, which are 3 % of the total board budget. This is $ 186.00 per student.

* Includes principal

About Our Catholic School Council

St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Catholic School Council functions as an advisory body to the school principal. We also have representation on the Regional Catholic School Council, which meets on a scheduled basis with the school board. Representatives of the community and the council reflect upon, discuss, and offer advice on a variety of issues. Monthly meetings are open to the community, and we welcome any parent or community member to attend.

The mission of the Catholic School Council is to improve instruction and to provide the best learning opportunities for our children. In addition, our activities are designed to support and strengthen the Catholic learning culture of our school, as well as the unique home-parish-school relationship at the heart of Catholic education.

Catholic faith teaches that parents are the primary educators of their children. Research shows that family/parent involvement in the education of children is one of the most powerful factors in improving student achievement. Over the coming year, your Catholic School Council will be inviting you to participate in many activities as part of our school renewal. Please join us, as we look forward to working with you to maintain quality Catholic education in our community.

If you have any questions, concerns, or issues for your Catholic School Council, please contact me through the school.

School Council Chair

A Message From Our Students

Our Catholic students speak for themselves:

"In St. Marguerite Bourgeoys School I have good teachers who care about me." (Gr. 8)

"I like coming to our school because I am doing well here." (Gr. 6)

"Our school is different because we learn about God." (Gr. 2)

"Our school offers an excellent program with lots of things to do after school." (Gr. 5)

"Our school is very special to me because Jesus is a big part of my life." (Gr. 4)

"Our school has many projects to help the poor." (Gr. 7)

A Message From Our Principal

Our staff is committed to providing a quality, faith-based education for your child. Guided by the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations, we are striving to pass on the Good News of Jesus to our young people. We look forward to continued collaboration with our Catholic School Council, our pastor and parish team, and our many community partners, as we seek to improve our service to our students and their families.

I am grateful to all who work with such dedication to make St. Marguerite Bourgeoys a learning community known for its academic excellence and vibrant faith, and for the privilege of being called to be servant leader in this community.

Together let us treasure and celebrate the gift of Catholic education. Our door is always open and you will be welcomed.

Principal

Secondary School Report Card 2000–2001

Province of Ontario

Name of School: New Town Secondary School

Name of Board: Southwest District School Board

About Our School

New Town Secondary School was established in 1962. With a student population of 1,400 and a total staff of 90, the school is proud of its tradition of preparing students for both post-secondary education and the world of work. Our alumni are involved in their communities as thoughtful and active citizens. A major expansion of the original building in the late 1970s occurred to accommodate the growing population of the area. In addition to the traditional academic program, New Town offers a program in Communications Technology and Technological Design. A broad range of extracurricular activities and partnerships with the local community enrich and extend the school program. About 70% of New Town students go on to enrol in postsecondary institutions. Most of our students come from the local community.

School Address:

Tel:

Fax:

E-mail:

Principal:

School Mission Statement

New Town Secondary School is a safe school where students and teachers strive for excellence as a community of learners. Our focus for students is on high academic achievement, promotion of school spirit, and civic responsibility. Partnerships are a key way to achieve our mission.

Vice-Principal:

Admin. Office Staff:

School Council Chair:

About Our Students

Number	1,400
Grade Distribution	450 (Grade 9); 400 (Grade 10); 350 (Grade 11); 250 (Grade 12)
Gender	627 males; 773 females
Primary Language Other Than English	20% 280 students
Years in Canada	85% of students born in Canada; 15% arrived in Canada in the last 5 years, largely from Asia, Africa and Central America
Special Education Assistance	Identified special needs students – 5%

Trustee:

Superintendent:

Director of Education:

Our Programs and Services

There is a full four-year academic program with ESL classes in each grade. The six computer labs were updated in 1999. The fully equipped school library has developed a partnership with the community library. There are computer workstations to assist students with assignments and research. The Teacher Advisor Program is now in its fourth year and is composed of multi-grade groupings where senior students mentor and role-model for junior students. The Special Education department provided assistance to 112 students (up from 90 last year) in both resource room and classroom settings. Eighteen Identification, Placement, and Review Committee meetings were conducted during the course of the school year, which allowed students to receive remedial help.

The Cooperative Education program is one of the school's most rapidly growing and successful programs, with 140 students taking courses at New Town while working in the community. The program has helped students clarify career choices and, in some cases provided offers of summer and full-time employment. The Peer Tutorial Program allows trained senior students to work with students who need extra help in a formally structured program before and after school. Communications Technology, now in its fifth year, continues to be a popular choice of students. Many graduates move directly into employment. At present, there is more demand than space for this program. The Artist-in-Residence Program, supported by our local service club, brings artists, novelists, and actors into the classroom to work with students and teachers.

Our Commitments

New Town has a long and distinguished commitment to public education. We embody the core values of public education, high standards in academic performance, universal access, equity, and cultural tolerance.

We believe every person has the right to the best possible education, no matter what his or her personal circumstances. A strong public education system is the highway for our young people to enter into our larger society.

We believe that strong and dynamic partnerships with our parents and community are essential to educate our students effectively These partnerships increase learning and student achievement, and give our students equity of access to our society and its institutions.

Our Improvement Plan Highlights

Addressing Literacy Issues in Grades 9 and 10

The Grade 9 and 10 teachers continue to plan and implement strategies to prepare students for the Grade 10 Literary test.

Creating a Safe and Welcoming School Environment

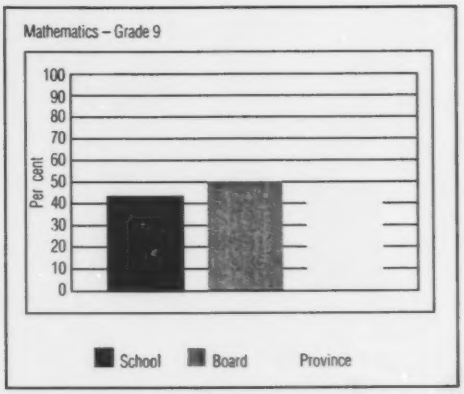
The staff and students have developed a plan to implement the board's antiracism and sexual harassment/bullying policies. The school has improved signage and lighting and has placed plants around the school. All these measures have helped to create a safer and more welcoming environment.

Extending Our Partnerships

We have formed a homework club with our local elementary school, in which our students tutor Grades 5 to 8 students three times a week. We organized a highly successful community cleanup day with our local business and residents association. We have incorporated a special afternoon performance of our dramatic and musical productions for seniors living in our community. We have entered into a special arrangement with the local faculty of education, which allows student teachers to spend extended time at New Town and gives our staff access to the faculty's professional services.

Our Results on EQAO Assessments 1999–2000

Grade 9 Mathematics Test



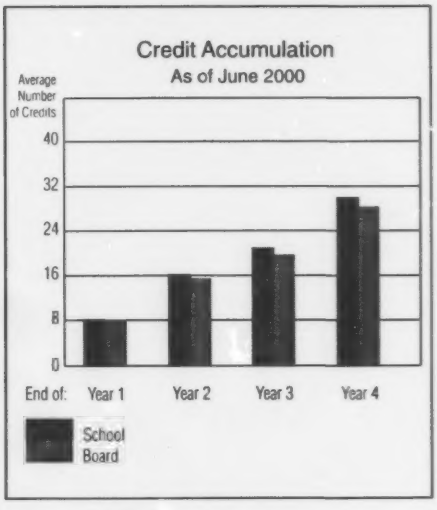
Percentage of students achieving level 3 or level 4

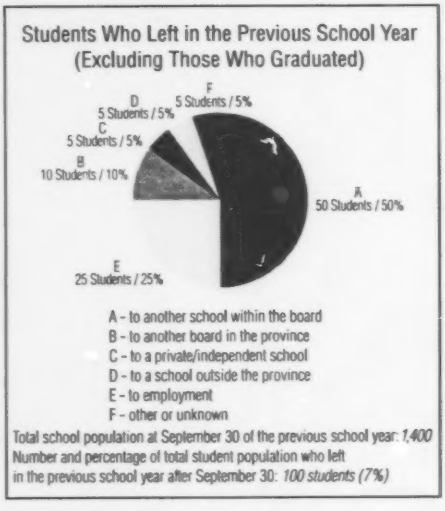
Other information from EQAO Grade 9 Math assessment (not yet published)

Grade 10 Literacy Test

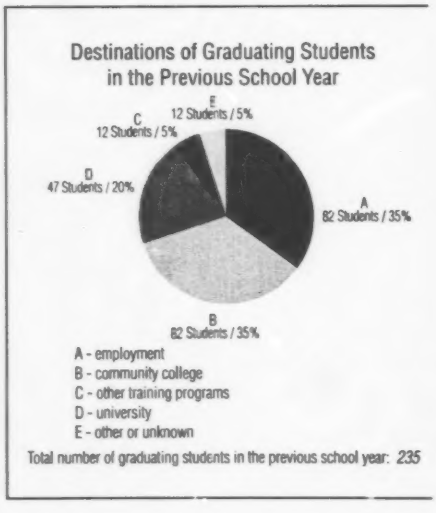
		% Passed School	% Passed Board	% Passed Province
Number of Students Writing the Test	355	61	65	68
Number of Students Absent or Deferred	45			

Other Key Performance Indicators




Students Who Left in the Previous School Year
(Excluding Those Who Graduated)
F
5 Students / 5%
D
5 Students / 5%
C
5 Students / 5%
B
10 Students / 10%
A
50 Students / 50%
E
25 Students / 25%
A - to another school within the board
B - to another board in the province
C - to a private/independent school
D - to a school outside the province
E - to employment
F - other or unknown

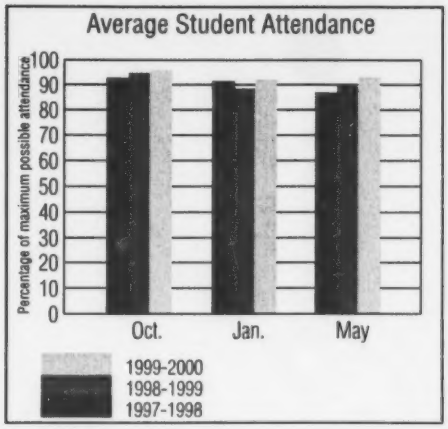
Total school population at September 30 of the previous school year: *1,400*
Number and percentage of total student population who left in the previous school year after September 30: *100 students (7%)*

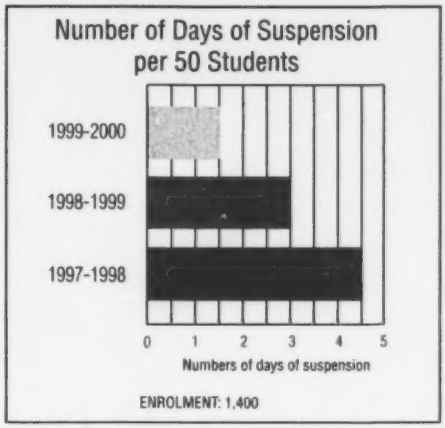


Total number of graduating students in the previous school year: *235*

Our Retention Rate 1999–2000

	Retention Rate
Grade 9 – OAC enrolment	93 %





School Safety

The school code of behaviour was updated this year by a committee of students, parents, staff, and community members. The code will be printed in the student agenda book and appear on the school website. Student workshops and a special assembly to imple ment the board's antiracism and sexual harassment policies were parts of the school goal of creating a safe and welcoming schoo environment. A school survey taken this spring indicates that more work needs to be done in Grades 9 and 10 in the area of sexua harassment. The school improvement plan committee is incorporating this area of concern into the school plan for next year.

What Our Students Think About Our School

My school is a place where: (% who agree)	Our School	Board Average
I like to be.	60	72
I feel good about my work.	62	81
I feel proud to be a student.	75	69
I can get along with most other students.	85	70
I find my work interesting.	50	55
I feel important.	70	70
Teachers treat me fairly.	85	80
Teachers are available for extra help.	72	75
There are lots of opportunities for clubs, sports, or other activities.	60	61

What Our Parents* Think About Our School

This school is a place where: (% who agree)	Our School	Board Average
I am kept informed about my child's progress.	75	70
I am well informed about events at the school.	78	72
I can easily contact staff when necessary.	75	70
An excellent education is provided.	80	78
There are high expectations for student performance.	82	80
Parents are welcome.	85	80
Student achievement is celebrated.	83	80

* The word "parent" is intended to include all of the main caregivers of our students.

Our School and Its Community

We believe that our school should be the centre of our community and that we have an important role to play in helping our community meet its challenges.

We work with our local business and residents association. The community uses our school for a variety of functions.

Our students are encouraged to fulfil their 40 hours of volunteer service in our community.

Our Staff

	Number	Full Time Equivalent	Ratio of Students – School	Ratio of Students – Board
Principal and V.P. (s)	3	3	1 : 467	1 : 510
Teachers	69	54	1 : 26	1 : 20
Education Assistants	4	3.5	1 : 400	1 : 450
Support Staff	12	10	1 : 140	1 : 140

Percentage of credit courses taught by teachers who do not have the subject recorded on their Certificate of Qualification 7 %

How Much It Costs to Run Our School

[1] 1999–2000 School Year

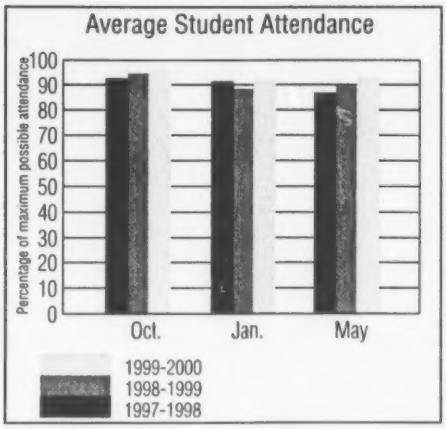
Classroom Costs*	$6,125,000	
Special Education Classroom Costs	$1,631,779	
Classroom Support	$235,000	
Custodial Services and Utilities	$585,990	
Transportation	$298,808	
Total	$8,876,577	**Board Average**
Per Student	$6,340	$6,500

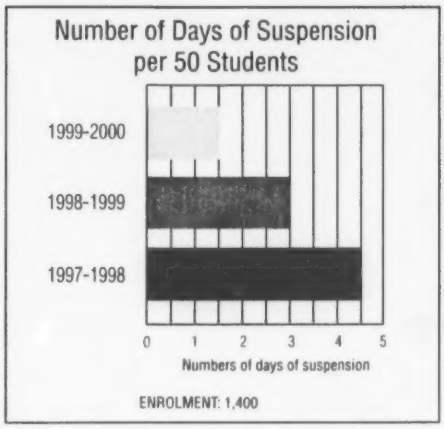
Regular Day-School Enrolment 1,400

Average Class Size 26

[1] The Board also has central administrative costs, which are 3 % of the total board budget. This is $ 190 per student.

* Includes principal and vice-principals





School Safety

The school code of behaviour was updated this year by a committee of students, parents, staff, and community members. The code will be printed in the student agenda book and appear on the school website. Student workshops and a special assembly to implement the board's antiracism and sexual harassment policies were parts of the school goal of creating a safe and welcoming school environment. A school survey taken this spring indicates that more work needs to be done in Grades 9 and 10 in the area of sexual harassment. The school improvement plan committee is incorporating this area of concern into the school plan for next year.

What Our Students Think About Our School

My school is a place where: (% who agree)	Our School	Board Average
I like to be.	60	72
I feel good about my work.	62	81
I feel proud to be a student.	75	69
I can get along with most other students.	85	70
I find my work interesting.	50	55
I feel important.	70	70
Teachers treat me fairly.	85	80
Teachers are available for extra help.	72	75
There are lots of opportunities for clubs, sports, or other activities.	60	61

What Our Parents* Think About Our School

This school is a place where: (% who agree)	Our School	Board Average
I am kept informed about my child's progress.	75	70
I am well informed about events at the school.	78	72
I can easily contact staff when necessary.	75	70
An excellent education is provided.	80	78
There are high expectations for student performance.	82	80
Parents are welcome.	85	80
Student achievement is celebrated.	83	80

* The word "parent" is intended to include all of the main caregivers of our students.

Our School and Its Community

We believe that our school should be the centre of our community and that we have an important role to play in helping our community meet its challenges.

We work with our local business and residents association. The community uses our school for a variety of functions.

Our students are encouraged to fulfil their 40 hours of volunteer service in our community.

Our Staff

	Number	Full Time Equivalent	Ratio of Students – School	Ratio of Students – Board
Principal and V.P. (s)	3	3	1 : 467	1 : 510
Teachers	69	54	1 : 26	1 : 20
Education Assistants	4	3.5	1 : 400	1 : 450
Support Staff	12	10	1 : 140	1 : 140

Percentage of credit courses taught by teachers who do not have the subject recorded on their Certificate of Qualification 7 %

How Much It Costs to Run Our School

[1] 1999–2000 School Year

Classroom Costs*	$6,125,000	
Special Education Classroom Costs	$1,631,779	
Classroom Support	$235,000	
Custodial Services and Utilities	$585,990	
Transportation	$298,808	
Total	$8,876,577	**Board Average**
Per Student	$6,340	$6,500

Regular Day-School Enrolment 1,400

Average Class Size 26

[1] The Board also has central administrative costs, which are 3 % of the total board budget. This is $ 190 per student.

* Includes principal and vice-principals

About Our School Council

The School Council is an advisory body consisting of council co-chairs, secretary, treasurer, four parents elected at large, two staff members, two Student Council members, two community representatives, and the principal. The School Council executive meets on the first Tuesday of every month. The executive meetings are open to all parents.

We participated in the school's annual Meet the Teacher Night in September and had membership on two board-parent committees We held four general meetings on the last Tuesdays of October, November, February, and May. We were pleased with the average attendance of 80 parents, especially with the high numbers from Grades 9 and 10 families. The program at our four general meetings resulted from our survey of parents' requests. Topics this year included: The New Tests in Grades 9 and 10, Choosing a College/ University Program, Body Image: What Parents Need to Know, and Homework: A School-Home Partnership.

School Council Chair

About Our Student Council

The Student Council of 14 is elected in May of the year prior to their taking office. The council consists of a president, a vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer, two representatives per grade, a social convener, and a community liaison.

This year our constitution was revised and updated to take account of the new four-year secondary school program. Highlights of the year included our three dances, especially our Welcome Grade 9 Dance, fundraising and volunteering for our local food bank, the Winter Fun Day, and the annual Spring Showcase of student talent.

The council is very proud of the community support for its activities, especially from our local business association and service clubs.

Student President

A Message From Our Principal

Dear Friends of New Town,

Just as each of our students has a report card that records his or her achievements of the past year, New Town Secondary School also has a report card. I hope you will find the information in this report card helpful. It identifies areas of strength and suggests areas for improvement in the year ahead.

I continue to be impressed with your involvement in and commitment to the school. I look forward to working with you in the new year.

Principal